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THE

MODERN

BRITISH DRAMA.

VOLUME THIRD.

THE

Modern

BRITISH DRAMA.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOLUME THIRD.

COMEDIES.

LONDON:

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REMARKS

ON

ENGLISH COMEDY.

In the notices of English Tragedy, prefixed to the first volume of this Collection, we have applied them severally to three periods of dramatic history. The same distinction may be followed with advantage in the present sketch; not that we pretend, in either case, a perfect and accurate division, for the influence of those causes which occasioned a change of taste was necessarily gradual. Our observations are therefore only applied to a general view of each æra, the commencement and termination of which may doubtless include plays which rather belonged to the school of that by which it is preceded or followed.

I. Our dramatic antiquaries maintain, that the oldest play which can, with any propriety, claim the title of a comedy, is the piece of low and broad humour, entitled, Gammer Gurton's Needle. If so, the art speedily improved; for that piece was acted in 1575, and within the space of thirty years, the comedies of Shakespeare, of Jonson, of Beaumont and Fletcher, and of Massinger, had graced the British theatre. The nature of our miscellaneous collection necessarily excludes the works of Shakespeare, which every lover of the drama possesses in a complete state, and consequently excuses us from the presumptuous attempt of epitomizing the general characteristics of his comedies. His powerful, though far unequal rival, despairing of imitating the wild and impetuous flights of his genius, professed, with a sullen and splenetic affectation of condescension, that he copied nature, and required no laugh from the audience, but when their own observation could trace in common life a likeness of the comic characters which he drew. It was on Jonson's comedies those lines of Dryden were chiefly grounded, which exposed the latter poet to the charge of an attempt to undermine the reputation of a celebrated predecessor:

> Thus Jonson did mechanic humour show,
> When men were dull and conversation low;
> Then comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse,
> Cobb's tankard was a jest, and Otter's horse.

The censure of Dryden is so far just, that Jonson chiefly aimed at mirth by the contrast and collision of *humours*, which was then the technical term for characters swayed and directed by some predominant passion, the display of which, under various circumstances, formed the strength of the comedy. Nor can it be denied that these characters of humour, though drawn with much strength of outline and boldness of colouring, bordered frequently on extravagance, and were, moreover, often a mere bald personification of the lowest vices and follies The comedies of Beaumont and Fletcher resembled the severe and dry style of Jonson, in those plays where the taste of Beaumont predominated. But, in the unassisted plays of Fletcher, as in Rule a Wife and have a Wife, and the Chances, the comedy is lively, light, whimsical and elegant, presenting frequently the fashionable manners of the day; and, in picturesque incident and laughable satire, outstripping, in the judgment of contemporaries, even Shakespeare himself. Massinger affords a strong contrast to all the comic writers of his time. His characters of comic folly are so clouded with deeper and darker passions, that Tragedy might often claim for her own those which his title-page assigns to the lighter muse. His Sir Giles Overreach is a Richard III. in ordinary life; his Luke is an Iago, whose vices break forth, first through the veil of hypocritical humility, and then through a second inner disguise of affected joviality. Few characters lay more powerful hold of the attention than those of Massinger, when represented by such an actor as Cooke, whose harsh, hard, dry, yet striking mode of action, conveys the idea of the domestic villain whom the poet wished to draw. Yet we doubt if his powerful acting is not witnessed with feelings very distinct from those with which we applaud the comic scene, and more allied to such as are excited by tragedy. In the art of conducting and connecting the story of the piece, those distinguished poets differed almost as widely as in their style of character. Fletcher, with the extremity of negligence, run his actors into a chaos of incident and bustle, without much attention to propriety, probability, or indeed to any thing more than throwing a comic light upon each isolated scene. The whole was winded up by some extraordinary accident, some unexpected discovery, some sudden change of mind and temper in a leading personage, or such other similar inartificial expedient, as no audience could admit to be fitting or natural, though they might be, perhaps, too much amused with the events preceding the catastrophe, to be critically scrupulous about the mode in which it was accomplished. Jonson did not assume the same license to the same extent. His character as a scholar, upon which he piqued himself, required a more strict conformity with the severe models of antiquity: Accordingly, in his comedies, the rules of Aristotle are decently observed; and the chief actor is not introduced as changing his habits, disposition, and temper, merely that the poet may end his play. Neither is Jonson, like Fletcher, guilty of admitting a variety of unconnected incidents into the same drama, strictly observing, on the contrary, his own rule, that, if there be many actions or plots in one play, they must be all subservient to the main catastrophe, and in a just and fitting proportion approach to the same general end. But Jonson's plays, like those of the ancients, are in the action as inartificial and naked, as regular and severe. His plots are bounded, and his characters simple; so that the perusal of his dramatis personæ, or the representation of a first act, enables the reader or hearer to guess pretty nearly at the nature of the catastrophe, and of the incidents which are to produce it. Massinger, on the contrary, with less rule, had more real art than the scholastic Jonson. It is seldom that from the beginning of his pieces we can judge of their probable

termination; and his characters, like those of real life, gradually open and develope themselves according to the circumstances in which they are placed. Neither does this art, in which Massinger has never been exceeded, rest merely upon the pleasing surprise which his plays afford at first reading or representation. On the contrary, in a second perusal, we enjoy the yet more rational pleasure of observing those minute and scarcely visible touches, by which that skilful author, from the very opening of the piece, indicates the germs of the passions which are to expand themselves in its progress. In one respect, all these ancient dramatists are censurable. The language of their comedy is often coarse and indelicate; a fault arising chiefly from the manners of the age in which they lived, and which was more flagrantly predominant in that which succeeded.

II. The license which attended the restoration, and the vitiated taste of Charles II. and his courtiers, debauched the stage to a degree unknown in any age or country. Indecency of dialogue was no longer the rude effusion of a careless poet to an unpolished audience, but became the regular and systematic support of comic effect upon all possible occasions. The play-wright, who had not ingenuity enough for a veiled allusion, made up by broad and direct language what he wanted in sly insinuation. The introduction of female performers, which, one would suppose, even according to the voluptuary's apprehension, ought to have checked this tide of gross and disgusting indelicacy, only gave it fresh zest. And so strong and universal was the taint, that, until the period of the Revolution, it is difficult to select any example of the comedy of that witty age which is fit for representation, unless in a castigated shape. The æra was distinguished by false taste, as well as indelicacy. The heavy and forgotten Shadwell essayed indeed the style of Ben Jonson, and affected to draw characters of humour; but Dryden, with Etherege, Sedley, and other "men of wit and pleasure about town," endeavoured to make their scenes a representation of the incessant attempt at sarcasm and repartee, which were then accounted the principal graces of fashionable conversation. This sort of raillery was called gallant, easy, and polite conversation, and was boasted as the language of the best society, to which the genius of a dramatic author was then a ready passport, though he seldom gained more by such an honour than an opportunity of improving the dialogue of the wit or fine gentleman of his next comedy. The Duke of Buckingham's Rehearsal, which exploded the extravagancies of the heroic tragedy, had some share in subduing the prevailing taste for those witty dialogues, which occupied whole scenes, without either displaying the characters, or forwarding the action, of the drama. And although this ambitious display of wit did not entirely lose ground, it cannot be denied that comedy continued to improve until the days of Congreve, Wycherly, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh. Meanwhile, the stores of foreign nations were laid under liberal contribution, and the English dramatists drew variety of incident, and complication of intrigue, from the Spanish comedians; while, from those of France, whose rules, if not strictly insisted upon, were well understood by Charles II. and his courtiers, they adopted in some degree refinement and regularity. Dryden, it is true, succeeded but indifferently in the task of writing comedy, not adopted, as he confesses, by choice, but imposed by the imperious necessity of his circumstances. Yet his Spanish Friar would have established his character as an English classic, had not his pre-eminence been more decided in other walks of poetry. But the buskin of Jonson, after having been in vain assumed by Shadwell, was more successfully essayed by Wycherly in his Plain Dealer. Manly and Mrs

Blackacre are both characters of humour, speaking and acting from a peculiar bias of temper and inclination. The hint of the former seems to have been taken from Moliere's Misanthrope, though the English author has displayed greater address in the action. Wycherly's Country Wife, which no modern audience could have tolerated in its original state, has been reformed into the Country Girl; and, by the comic powers of an excellent modern actress, obtains a distinguished place among our stock-plays. But Congreve carried the comedy of this period to its perfection; and just about the close of the seventeenth century, produced the four most witty plays which our language can boast. Although too deeply tinged with indelicacy, a gradual refinement of taste exempted them, in part at least, from the grossness of Charles the Second's time. In other respects, they are excellent. The glowing brilliancy of Congreve's dialogue is unequalled, perhaps, in the drama of any nation, and has, in some degree, the effect of obscuring his no less exquisite power of marking the characters of his plays. The only fault that can be objected to him, save that which he has in common with all other comic writers of that licentious age, is a redundancy of wit,—a blemish scarce to be found in any author, save himself and Butler. A fault, however, it certainly is; for the perpetual succession of repartee fatigues at length the audience, and the author's own powers of conversation are sometimes imparted to characters to whom they are by no means appropriate. His fools and coxcombs are as witty as his men of fashion; and the valets and chamber-maids emulate their masters and mistresses in promptness of repartee. Yet, under a disadvantage of so singular a nature, Congreve must be allowed the praise of uniting the power of drawing and designing humourous characters, which was the boast of Ben Jonson, with that of enlivening his scene by the life, air, and gaiety of dialogue which were demanded under the lively reign of Charles II.

III. Vanbrugh and Farquhar were the principal props of the stage when Congreve withdrew from it in disgust about the year 1700. Not being possessed of the copious wit of their friend and contemporary, these authors were easily able to avoid the principal defect of his compositions. They displayed their stock of lively and smart things to better advantage, as they were conscious that it was more easily exhaustible. Hence, if their dialogue fell short of the brilliancy of Congreve's, they gained in nature what they lost in pointed effect; and it could not be objected to them, as to their predecessor, that, in the prodigality of their wit and sharpness of conceit, they confounded the distinctions of dramatic characters. In other respects, they strongly resembled each other. Light, lively, humourous, never flagging upon the stage, and sustaining their characters by such easy language as seldom over-burdened the memory or powers of a performer, Vanbrugh and Farquhar have left us some of our best acting plays. Vanbrugh, with his friend Congreve, afforded Collier the fairest mark when he attacked the profligacy of the stage; nor has it been possible to admit his plays upon a modern theatre without much pruning. Farquhar profited by the lesson, and was not more indelicate than that age seems to have thought very permissible. His genius resembled that of Vanbrugh; but if the latter excelled him in ease of dialogue, Farquhar has perhaps some superiority in incident, and in the power of embodying the lighter follies of fashionable life. His Sir Harry Wildair was long the delight of the theatre; and the Beaux Stratagem exhibited in Archer a man of fashion of a warmer temperament, equally fortunate in fascinating liveliness and elegance of manners, rendered more picquant by the contrast with his menial disguise. The commencement of the eighteenth century presented also the Drummer

of Addison, a comedy which, without any powerful delineation of character, (if we except the old Steward) is a favourable specimen of the amiable temper and peculiar vein of ironic pleasantry which distinguished the accomplished author. His friend Steele was scarcely so fortunate. There is a rudeness and inequality in all his writings, which is particularly visible in his dramatic compositions. His attempts at the tender and pathetic are misplaced and tedious; and our greatest relief is in the scenes of broad humour, of which Steele possessed a plentiful portion. Both these authors had in this, as in other departments of polite literature, the superior praise of endeavouring to convey instruction in the guise of pleasure. The stage, under such auspices, began to vindicate itself from the charge of immorality, and decency was now expected and exacted from those who professed to offer an elegant amusement to a polished audience. The elder dramatists, whose works were excluded under these new canons of taste, afforded now an inexhaustible quarry to authors, who brought their plays forth in a corrected and amended state. Among these labourers, Cibber was one of the most active. But although insulted by Pope for his obligations to the French and to the ancients; although Fletcher gave him the matter for Love Makes a Man, and She Would and She Would Not; and Barnaby, with the French comedy of Le Gallant Double, afforded him the ground-work of the Double Gallant, it ought not to be forgotten, in favour of this singular, undaunted, and whimsical personage, that, in the Careless Husband, he has given us a most admirable comedy, in which, without having recourse to bustling incident, extravagant character, overstrained dialogue, or low humour, the attention is gradually and pleasingly fixed upon such characters as have always existed in fashionable life, and on the issue of such adventures as they are frequently engaged in. The character of Lady Betty Modish was acted with irresistible comic spirit by the celebrated Mrs Oldfield, from whose real character Cibber is supposed to have sketched his imaginary lady of fashion. This may be considered as the first genteel comedy upon the English stage, and the precursor of a numerous class of plays, which did not, as formerly, represent the operation of one single passion rushing with impetuosity to the accomplishment of its desires. It is not the natural, but the artificial state of man, which this species of drama presents; exhibiting characters not acting under the predominance of natural feeling, but warped from their genuine bent by the habits, rules, and ceremonies of high life. The food of its satire is rather the various shades of affectation than the different qualities of mind; for, as it is the principal object of an artificial state of society to veil the operation of actual feeling, individuals are rather distinguished by peculiarities of manner than of thought and action, just as the combatants of yore were known by their crests and armorial bearings, while their faces were hidden under their helmets. But the success of the Careless Husband did not invite imitation so early as might have been expected. Other plays came forward, grounding their interest upon the operation of passion, or upon suspense excited by complexity of intrigue, whose authors claim a momentary notice before the imitators of Cibber. As Cibber had himself been an amender or cobler of other men's plays, it was the fate of his favourite Nonjuror, borrowed from Moliere's Tartuffe, and applied to the purposes of a political party, to be diverted to an attack upon a religious sect, and, under the title of the Hypocrite, flung at the heads of the Methodists. Of Mrs Centlivre's pieces, it is only necessary to say, that she has copied the bustle of the Spanish plots, and that disguises, trap-doors, mistakes, intrigues, and dark closets, supply what is wanting in language and in dramatic characters. Yet the Busy Body and the Wonder

are always acted with applause; for, as has been observed by a national critic, the Englishman, naturally of a more restrained and saturnine disposition, comes to the theatre to have his attention excited by incident and stage dilemma, while the more lively Frenchman seeks it as a place where his spirits are to be lowered, and his temper rendered serious by protracted dialogue and sedative soliloquy. The plays of Moliere are frequently an exception; and in translating his Miser, Fielding, so inimitable in his own walk, gave the stage the only play which, notwithstanding his various theatrical attempts, has been found worthy of retaining a place there. It is scarce worth while to notice Kenrick's anomalous comedy, entitled Falstaff's Wedding, which, however, we have admitted into this collection as a singular instance of the author's temerity in attempting an imitation of Shakespeare upon his own canvass, and of his good fortune in escaping so decently from his perilous essay. Murphy's Way to Keep Him, and Colman's Jealous Wife, are imitations of the Careless Husband, and by no means deficient in merit, though inferior to their original. The latter has the additional disadvantage of being, in many respects, literally copied from Tom Jones; and it has rarely happened that an author, thus openly renouncing all pretensions to originality, is very successful in establishing his claim to public applause. The Way to Keep Him, and the Suspicious Husband, are likewise genteel comedies; toward which species of composition the taste of the times, about the middle of the eighteenth century, seemed decidedly to incline. The bias was considerably increased by the success of the Clandestine Marriage, in which the principal comic character, though somewhat of a caricature, was so admirably presented by King, as to ensure a rapid and enduring popularity to that agreeable comedy. The path of genteel comedy is, however, one of the most difficult in the drama; and perhaps the more so, because it seems one of the easiest. Few authors by profession gain admittance into that society where the nicer and more exquisite shades of fashionable folly, affectation, dissimulation, and coquetry are found to predominate. Fewer still have the power of fixing and tracing, with a comic pencil, these evanescent and delicate peculiarities which flit and fluctuate upon the surface of an uniform and refined system of manners, like the vapour of the breath upon polished steel. Yet these transient shades must not only be seized and represented, but so represented, that he who runs may read, and that the citizen or artizan, who is ignorant of the manners of high life, may yet comprehend its absurdities, and laugh at its affectations. Where this delicacy of touch is wanting, genteel comedy is, of all stupid entertainments, the most tiresome; nor can we account for the toleration extended to the numberless stupifying productions claiming the name, excepting upon the principle under which some persons will endure the dullest possible society, provided it include persons pretending to rank or title. Goldsmith, with all the humour of his nation, made two attempts to bring back the public taste to a relish for nature and wit, in characters drawn from the middling and lower ranks of life. The Good-natured Man was not very successful, although the admirable character of Croaker ought to have ensured it. But She Stoops to Conquer, the second well-known effort of Goldsmith's dramatic muse, although certainly bordering upon farce, was supported with so much liveliness of dialogue, so much broad humour and ludicrous incident, that even the most refined part of the audience were compelled to relax into the hearty laugh of Old England and of nature. The genteel comedy has been since successfully revived in the West Indian of Cumberland: the Brothers, another piece of that author, rather draws its interest from the humour displayed in

the lower scenes. Both, especially the former, retain deservedly a high rank among our acting plays. But the glory of the British stage is to be found in the writings of an author "lost but too soon in yonder house ——." Without pretending to say whether the Rivals and the School for Scandal are to be considered as genteel comedies in the strictest sense of the word, they display that nice and delicate taste which seizes the manners as they rise and disappear, combined with the broader and more laughable delineation of comic character. The wit of the author, though its flashes are as bright as those of Congreve, being held under due restraint, serves, on the one hand, to enliven the easy and natural dialogue of high life, while the portion of it which is imparted to that of the lower characters, is so well accommodated to their more vulgar language and habits of thinking, that none of its coruscations could be transferred to another person of the drama than him by whom it is spoken, without an obvious offence against propriety. The plots of Mr Sheridan's plays are happily contrived, and developed with much stage effect, though without any complication of intrigue. They have, doubtless, their faults; but, as we must own we were never able to observe any which ought to be mentioned in comparison with their merits, we shall leave their dissection to more acute critics. The bounds of our collection do not permit us to prosecute this investigation any farther; a circumstance which we cannot regret, since we could only trace the declension of the art from Attic comedy to German importations of false sensibility, and domestic productions, where the humour rests upon grimace, cant, and catch-words. Yet it is but just to say, that comedy still receives some countenance from the British audience, and that its revival, upon a true and classic model, may be more reasonably hoped than that of tragic representation.

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THE

BRITISH DRAMA.

EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.

ALTERED FROM

BEN JONSON.

PROLOGUE.

THO' need make many poets, and some such
As art and nature have not bettered much;
Yet ours, for want, hath not so loved the stage,
As he dare serve the ill customs of the age,
Or purchase your delight at such a rate,
As, for it, he himself must justly hate:
To make a child now swaddled, to proceed
Man, and then shoot up in one beard and weed,
Past three-score years: or, with three rusty swords,
And help of some few foot and half-foot words,
Fight over York and Lancaster's long jars,
And in the tiring-house bring wounds to scars.
He rather prays, you will be pleased to see
One such to-day, as other plays should be;
Where neither chorus wafts you o'er the seas,
Nor creaking throne comes down, the boys to please;
Nor nimble squib is seen, to make afear'd
The gentlewomen; nor rolled bullet heard
To say, it thunders; nor tempestuous drum
Rumbles, to tell you when the storm doth come;
But deeds, and language, such as men do use,
And persons, such as comedy would choose,
When she would shew an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes;
Except we make 'em such, by loving still
Our popular errors, when we know they're ill.
I mean such errors as you'll all confess,
By laughing at them, they deserve no less:
Which, when you heartily do, there's hope left then,
You, that have so graced monsters, may like men.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

KITELY, *a Merchant.*
Captain BOBADIL, *a blustering Coward.*
KNO'WELL, *an old Gentleman.*
ED. KNO'WELL, *his Son.*
BRAIN-WORM, *the Father's Man.*
Master STEPHEN, *a Country Gull.*
DOWNRIGHT, *a plain Squire.*
WELL-BRED, *his Half Brother.*
Justice CLEMENT, *an old merry Magistrate.*
ROGER FORMAL, *his Clerk.*
Master MATTHEW, *the Town Gull.*
CASH, *Kitely's Man.*
COB, *a Water-bearer.*

WOMEN.

Dame KITELY.
Mrs BRIDGET, *Sister to Kitely.*
TIB, *Cob's Wife.*

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Court-yard before* KNO'WELL'S *House.*

Enter KNO'WELL *and* BRAINWORM.

Kno. A GOODLY day toward! and a fresh morning! Brain-worm,
Call up your young master. Bid him rise, sir.
Tell him, I have some business to employ him.
Brain. I will, sir, presently.
Kno. But hear you, sirrah!
If he be at his book, disturb him not.
Brain. Well, sir. [*Exit.*
Kno. How happy, yet, should I esteem myself,
Could I, by any practice, wean the boy
From one vain course of study he affects.
He is a scholar, if a man may trust
The liberal voice of Fame in her report,
Of good account in both our universities;
Either of which have favoured him with graces.
But their indulgence must not spring in me
A fond opinion that he cannot err.
Myself was once a student; and, indeed,
Fed with the self-same humour he is now,
Dreaming on nought but idle poetry,
That fruitless and unprofitable art,
Good unto none, but least to the professors,
Which, then, I thought the mistress of all knowledge:
But since, time and the truth have waked my judgment,
And reason taught me better to distinguish
The vain from the useful learnings——

Enter Master STEPHEN.

Cousin Stephen!
What news with you, that you are here so early?
Step. Nothing, but e'en come to see how you do, uncle.
Kno. That's kindly done, you are welcome, coz.
Step. Ay, I know that, sir. I would not ha' come else. How doth my cousin Edward, uncle?
Kno. O, well, coz, go in and see: I doubt he be scarce stirring yet.
Step. Uncle, afore I go in, can you tell me an' he have e'er a book of the sciences of hawking and hunting? I would fain borrow it.
Kno. Why, I hope you will not a hawking now, will you?
Step. No wosse, but I'll practise against the next year, uncle. I have bought me a hawk, and a hood, and bells, and all; I lack nothing but a book to keep it by.
Kno. O, most ridiculous!
Step. Nay, look you now, you are angry, uncle. Why, you know, an' a man have not skill in the hawking and hunting languages now-a-days, I'll not give a rush for 'em. They are more studied than the Greek, or the Latin. He is for no gallant's company without them. And by Gad's lid I scorn it, I, so I do, to be a consort for every hum-drum; hang them scroyls, there's nothing in them in the world. What do you talk on it? Because I dwell at Hogsden, I shall keep company with none but the archers of Finsbury! or the citizens, that come a-ducking to Islington ponds! A fine jest, i'faith! slid, a gentleman mun shew himself like a gentleman.—Uncle, I pray you be not angry. I know what I have to do; I trow, I am no novice.
Kno. You are a prodigal, absurd coxcomb: go to!
Nay, never look at me, 'tis I that speak.
Take't as you will, sir, I'll not flatter you.
Have you not yet found means enow to waste
That, which your friends have left you, but you must
Go cast away your money on a kite,
And know not how to keep it, when you've done?
O, 'tis comely! this will make you a gentleman!
Well, cousin, well! I see you are e'en past hope
Of all reclaim. Ay, so, now you're told on it,
You look another way.
Step. What would you ha' me do!
Kno. What would I have you do! I'll tell you, kinsman;
Learn to be wise, and practise how to thrive;
That would I have you do; and not to spend
Your coin on every bauble, that you fancy,
On every foolish brain, that humours you.
I would not have you to invade each place,
Nor thrust yourself on all societies,
Till men's affections, or your own desert,
Should worthily invite you to your rank.
He, that is so respectless in his courses,
Oft sells his reputation at cheap market.
Nor would I you should melt away yourself
In flashing bravery, lest, while you affect
To make a blaze of gentry to the world,
A little puff of scorn extinguish it,
And you be left like an unsavoury snuff,
Whose property is only to offend.
I'd have you sober, and contain yourself;
Not, that your sail be bigger than your boat:
But moderate your expences now (at first),
As you may keep the same proportion still.
Nor stand so much on your gentility,
Which is an airy, mere borrowed thing,
From dead men's dust and bones; and none of yours,
Except you make, or hold it. Who comes here?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Save you, gentlemen.
Step. Nay, we do not stand much on our gentility, friend; yet, you are welcome; and I assure you, mine uncle here is a man of a thousand a-year, Middlesex land; he has but one son in all the world; I am his next heir (at the common law) Master Stephen, as simple as I stand here; if my cousin die (as there is hope he will). I have a pretty living o' my own, too, beside, hard by here.
Serv. In good time, sir.
Step. In good time, sir! why, and in very good time, sir. You do not flout, friend, do you?
Serv. Not I, sir.

Step. Not you, sir! you were not best, sir; an' you should, here be them can perceive it, and that quickly too: go to. And they can give it again soundly too, an' need be.

Serv. Why, sir, let this satisfy you: good faith, I had no such intent.

Step. Sir, an' I thought you had, I would talk with you, and that presently.

Serv. Good master Stephen, so you may, sir, at your pleasure.

Step. And so I would, sir, good my saucy companion, an' you were out of my uncle's ground, I can tell you; though I do not stand upon my gentility neither, in it.

Kno. Cousin! cousin! will this ne'er be left?

Step. Whoreson, base fellow? a mechanical serving man? By this cudgel, an' 'twere not for shame, I would——

Kno. What would you do, you peremptory gull?
If you cannot be quiet, get you hence.
You see the honest man demeans himself
Modestly towards you, giving no reply
To your unseasoned, quarrelling, rude fashion:
And still you huff it, with a kind of carriage,
As void of wit as of humanity.
Go, get you in! 'fore Heaven, I am ashamed
Thou hast a kinsman's interest in me.

[*Exit* STEPHEN.

Serv. I pray, sir, is this master Kno'well's house?

Kno. Yes, marry, is it, sir.

Serv. I should inquire for a gentleman here, one master Edward Kno'well: do you know any such, sir, I pray you?

Kno. I should forget myself else, sir.

Serv. Are you the gentleman? cry your mercy, sir: I was required by a gentleman in the city, as I rode out at this end of the town, to deliver you this letter, sir.

Kno. To me, sir? What do you mean? Pray you remember your court'sie. [*To his most selected friend, master* EDWARD KNO'WELL.] What might the gentleman's name be, sir, that sent it? Nay, pray you be covered.

Serv. One master Well-bred, sir.

Kno. Master Well-bred! A young gentleman, is he not?

Serv. The same, sir; master Kitely married his sister: the rich merchant in the Old Jewry.

Kno. You say very true. Brain-worm!

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. Sir.

Kno. Make this honest friend drink here.—
Pray you go in.

[*Exeunt* BRAIN-WORM *and Servant.*

This letter is directed to my son:
Yet I am Edward Kno'well too, and may,
With the safe conscience of good manners, use
The fellow's error to my satisfaction.
Well, I will break it ope (old men are curious)
Be it but for the style's sake, and the phrase,
To see if both do answer my son's praises,
Who is almost grown the idolater
Of this young Well-bred: What have we here?
What's this?

[*The Letter.*]

'Why, Ned, I beseech thee, hast thou forsworn all thy friends i' the Old Jewry? or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there? Yet if thou dost, come over, and but see our fripery; change an old shirt for a whole smock with us: Do not conceive that antipathy between us and Hogsden, as was between Jews and hog's-flesh. Leave thy vigilant father alone, to number over his green apricots, evening and morning, o' the north-west wall: an' I had been his son, I had saved him the labour long since; if taking in all the young wenches that pass by, at the back door, and coddling every kernel of the fruit for them would have served. But prithee, come over to me, quickly, this morning: I have such a present for thee! Our Turkey company never sent the like to the Grand Signior. One is a rhimer, sir, o' your own batch, your own leven; but doth think himself poet-major o' the town; willing to be shewn, and worthy to be seen.—The other—I will not venture his description with you till you come, because I would have you make hither with an appetite. If the worst of them be not worth your journey, draw your bill of charges, as unconscionable as any Guild-hall verdict will give it you, and you shall be allowed your viaticum.

'*From the Windmill.*'

From the Burdello, it might come as well;
The Spittal, or Pict-hatch. Is this the man,
My son hath sung so, for the happiest wit,
The choicest brain, the times have sent us forth?
I know not what he may be in the arts;
Nor what in schools: but, surely, for his manners,
I judge him a profane and dissolute wretch:
Worse, by possession of such great good gifts,
Being the master of so loose a spirit.
Why, what unhallowed ruffian would have writ
In such a scurrilous manner to a friend?
Why should he think, I tell my apricots?
Or play the Hesperian dragon with my fruit,
To watch it? Well, my son, I thought
You'd had more judgment to have made election
Of your companions, than to have ta'en on trust
Such petulant, jeering gamesters, that can spare
No argument, or subject from their jest.
But I perceive, affection makes a fool
Of any man, too much the father. Brain-worm.

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. Sir.

Kno. Is the fellow gone, that brought this letter?

Brain. Yes, sir, a pretty while since.

Kno. And where's your young master?

Brain. In his chamber, sir.

Kno. He spake not with the fellow, did he?

Brain. No, sir, he saw him not.

Kno. Take you this letter, and deliver it to my son;
But with no notice, that I've opened it, on your life.

Brain. O lord, sir, that were a jest indeed!

Kno. I am resolved I will not stop his journey;

Nor practise any violent means to stay
The unbridled course of youth in him; for that,
Restrained, grows more impatient; and in kind,
Like to the eager, but the gen'rous greyhound,
Who, ne'er so little from his game withheld,
Turns head, and leaps up at his holder's throat.
There is a way of winning, more by love,
And urging of the modesty, than fear:
Force works on servile natures, not the free.
He, that's compelled to goodness, may be good;
But, 'tis but for that fit: where others, drawn
By softness, and example, get a habit.
Then, if they stray, but warn them; and the same
They would for virtue do, they'll do for shame.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Young* KNO'WELL'S *Study.*

Enter EDWARD KNO'WELL *and* BRAIN-WORM.

E. Kno. Did he open it, say'st thou?

Brain. Yes, o' my word, sir, and read the contents.

E. Kno. That scarce contents me. What countenance, pray thee, made he in the reading of it? Was he angry, or pleased?

Brain. Nay, sir, I saw him not read it, nor open it, I assure your worship.

E. Kno. No! how know'st thou, then, that he did either!

Brain. Marry, sir, because he charged me, on my life, to tell nobody that he opened it: which, unless he had done, he would never fear to have it revealed.

E. Kno. That's true: well, I thank thee, Brain-worm. [*Exit.*

Enter Master STEPHEN.

Step. Oh! Brain-worm, did'st thou not see a fellow here, in a what sha'-call him doublet? He brought mine uncle a letter e'en now.

Brain. Yes, master Stephen, what of him?

Step. Oh! I ha' such a mind to beat him—— where is he? can'st thou tell?

Brain. Faith, he is not of that mind: he is gone, master Stephen.

Step. Gone! which way? when went he? how long since?

Brain. He is rid hence. He took horse at the street door.

Step. And I staid i' the fields! whoreson, scanderberg rogue! O that I had but a horse to fetch him back again!

Brain. Why, you may ha' my mistress's gelding to save your longing, sir.

Step. But I ha' no boots, that's the spite on't.

Brain. Why, a fine wisp of hay, rolled hard, master Stephen.

Step. No, faith, it's no boot to follow him now; let him e'en go and hang. Prithee, help to truss me a little. He does so vex me——

Brain. You'll be worse vexed when you are trussed, master Stephen. Best keep unbraced, and walk yourself till you be cold; your choler may founder you else.

Step. By my faith, and so I will, now thou tell'st me on't. How dost thou like my leg, Brain-worm?

Brain. A very good leg, master Stephen; but the woollen stocking does not recommend it so well.

Step. Foh, the stockings be good enough now summer is coming on, for the dust: I will have a pair of silk against winter, that I go to dwell in the town. I think my leg would shew in a silk hose.

Brain. Believe me, master Stephen, rarely well.

Step. In sadness, I think it would; I have a reasonable good leg.

Brain. You have an excellent good leg, master Stephen; but I cannot stay to praise it longer now; and I am very sorry for't. [*Exit.*

Step. Another time will serve, Brain-worm.—Gra-mercy for this.

Enter Young KNO'WELL.

E. Kno. Ha, ha, ha!

Step. 'Slid! I hope he laughs not at me; an' he do——

E. Kno. Here was a letter, indeed, to be intercepted by a man's father, and do him good with him! He cannot but think most virtuously both of me and the sender, sure, that make the careful coster-monger of him in our familiar epistles. Well, if he read this with patience, I'll be gelt, and troll ballads for Mr John Trundle yonder, the rest of my mortality. It is true, and likely, my father may have as much patience as another man; for he takes much physic; and oft taking physic makes a man very patient. But would your packet, master Wellbred, had arrived at him in such a minute of his patience; then we had known the end of it, which now is doubtful, and threatens—what? my wise cousin! nay, then, I'll furnish our feast with one gull more toward the mess. He writes to me of a brace, and here's one, that's three! O, for a fourth! Fortune! if ever thou'lt use thine eyes, I entreat thee——

Step. O, now I see who he laughed at. He laughed at somebody in that letter. By this good light, an' he had laughed at me——

E. Kno. How now, cousin Stephen, melancholy?

Step. Yes, a little. I thought you had laughed at me, cousin.

E. Kno. Why, what an' I had, coz, what would you ha' done?

Step. By this light, I would ha' told mine uncle.

E. Kno. Nay, if you would ha' told your uncle, I did laugh at you, coz.

Step. Did you, indeed?

E. Kno. Yes, indeed.

Step. Why, then——

E. Kno. What then?

Step. I am satisfied; it is sufficient.

E. Kno. Why, be so, gentle coz. And I pray you, let me entreat a courtesy of you. I am sent for this morning, by a friend i' the Old Jewry, to come to him: 'tis but crossing o'er the field to

Moor-gate: will you bear me company? I protest, *it is* not to draw you into bond, or any plot against the state, coz.

Step. Sir, that's all one, an' 'twere; you shall command me, twice as far as Moor-gate, to do you good, in such a matter. Do you think I would leave you? I protest——

E. Kno. No, no, you shall not protest, coz.

Step. By my fackins, but I will by your leave; I will protest more to my friend, than I will speak of at this time.

E. Kno. You speak very well, coz.

Step. Nay, not so, neither; you shall pardon me: but I speak to serve my turn.

E. Kno. Your turn, coz! Do you know what you say? A gentleman of your sort, parts, carriage, and estimation, to talk of your turn in this company, and to me, alone, like a water-bearer at a conduit! fie! a wight, that, hitherto, his every step hath left the stamp of a great foot behind him, at every word the savour of a strong spirit; and he! this man, so graced, so gilded, or, to use a more fit metaphor, so tin-foil'd by nature, as not ten house-wives' pewter (again' a good time) shews more bright to the world than he! and he (as I said last, so I say again, and still shall say it) this man! to conceal such real ornaments as these, and shadow their glory, as a milliner's wife does her wrought stomacher, with a smoky lawn, or a black cypress? Oh, coz! it cannot be answered, go not about it. Drake's old ship, at Deptford, may sooner circle the world again. Come, wrong not the quality of your desert, with looking downward, coz; but hold up your head, so; and let the idea of what you are be pourtrayed in your face, that men may read in your physiognomy, 'here, within this place, is to be seen the true, rare, and accomplished monster, or miracle of nature,' which is all one. What think you of this, coz?

Step. Why, I do think of it; and I will be more proud, and melancholy, and gentleman-like, than I have been, I'll assure you.

E. Kno. Why, that's resolute, master Stephen! Now, if I can but hold him up to his height, as it is happily begun, it will do well for a suburb-humour: we may hap have a match with the city, and play him for forty pounds. Come, coz.

Step. I'll follow you.

E. Kno. Follow me? you must go before.

Step. Nay, an' I must, I will. Pray you shew me, good cousin. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Street before* COB'S *House.*

Enter Master MATTHEW.

Mat. I think this be the house. What, hoa!

Enter COB, *from the House.*

Cob. Who is there? O, Master Matthew! give your worship good morrow.

Mat. What, Cob! How dost thou, good Cob? Dost thou inhabit here, Cob?

Cob. Ay, sir, I and my lineage ha' kept a poor house here in our days.

Mat. Thy lineage, monsieur Cob? What lineage? What lineage?

Cob. Why, sir, an ancient lineage and a princely. Mine ancestry came from a king's belly, no worse man: and yet no man neither (by your worship's leave, I did lye in that,) but Herring the king of fish, (from his belly I proceed) one o' the monarchs o' the world I assure you. The first red herring that was broil'd in Adam and Eve's kitchen, do I fetch my pedigree from, by the Harrot's book. His Cob was my great-great-mighty-great grandfather.

Mat. Why mighty? Why mighty? I pray thee.

Cob. Oh, it was a mighty while ago, sir, and a mighty great Cob.

Mat. How know'st thou that?

Cob. How know I? why, I smell his ghost, ever and anon.

Mat. Smell a ghost? Oh unsavoury jest! and the ghost of a herring, Cob?

Cob. Aye, sir, with favour of your worship's nose, Mr Matthew, why not the ghost of a herring-cob, as well as the ghost of Rasher-bacon?

Mat. Roger Bacon thou wouldst say?

Cob. I say Rasher-Bacon. They were both broil'd o'th' coals; and a man may smell broiled meat, I hope? You are a scholar; upsolve me that now.

Mat. Oh, raw ignorance! Cob, canst thou shew me of a gentleman, one Captain Bobadil, where his lodging is?

Cob. O, my guest, sir, you mean!

Mat. Thy guest! Alas! ha, ha.

Cob. Why do you laugh, sir? Do you not mean Captain Bobadil?

Mat. Cob, pray thee, advise thyself well: do not wrong the gentleman and thyself too. I dare be sworn he scorns thy house. He! he lodge in such a base, obscure place as thy house! Tut, I know his disposition so well, he would not lie in thy bed, if thou would'st give it him.

Cob. I will not give it him, though, sir. Mass, I thought somewhat was in it we could not get him to-bed, all night! Well, sir, though he lies not on my bed, he lies on my bench. And if it please you to go in, sir, you shall find him with two cushions under his head, and his cloak wrapped about him, as though he had neither won nor lost; and yet, I warrant, he never cast better in his life, than he has done to-night.

Mat. Why, was *he* drunk?

Cob. Drunk, sir! you hear not me say so. Perhaps he swallowed a tavern-token, or some such device, sir: I have nothing to do withal. I deal with water, and not with wine. Give me my tankard there, hoa. God be with you, sir, it is six o'clock: I should have carried two turns by this. What hoa! my stopple! come.

Mat. Lie in a water-bearer's house! A gentleman of his havings! Well, I'll tell him my mind.

Cob. What, Tib! shew this gentleman up to the captain.—[TIB *shews Master* MAT. *into the house.*] Oh, an my house were the Brazenhead! Faith, it would e'en speak no fools yet. You should have some now, would take this Mr Mat-

thew to be a gentleman at the least. His father is an honest man, a worshipful fish-monger, and so forth; and now does he creep, and wriggle into acquaintance with all the brave gallants about the town, such as my guest is. O, my guest is a fine man! and they flout him invincibly. He useth every day to a merchant's house (where I serve water) one Master Kitely's i'th' Old Jewry; and here's the jest, he's in love with my master's sister, Mistress Bridget, and calls her mistress: and there he will sit you a whole afternoon, sometimes reading o' these same abominable, vile, (a pox on 'em! I cannot abide 'em) rascally verses, poyetry, poyetry, and speaking of enterludes, 'twill make a man burst to hear him. And the wenches, they so jear and ti-hee at him—well, should they do so much to me, I'd forswear them all by the foot of Pharaoh. There's an oath! How many water-bearers shall you hear swear such an oath? Oh, I have a guest, (he teaches me) he does swear the legiblest of any man christened: by St George—the foot of Pharaoh—the body o' me,—as I am a gentleman, and a soldier; such dainty oaths! and withall, he does take this same filthy roguish tobacco, the finest and cleanliest! it would do a man good to see the fume come forth at's tonnels! Well, he owes me forty shillings, my wife lent him out of her purse by six-pence a time, besides his lodging. I would I had it! I shall ha' it, he says, the next action. Helter skelter, hang sorrow, care 'll kill a cat, up-tails all, and a louse for the hangman. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.—*A Room in* COB'S *House.* BOBADIL *discovered upon a bench.* TIB *enters to him.*

Bob. Hostess, hostess!

Tib. What say you, sir?

Bob. A cup o' thy small-beer, sweet hostess.

Tib. Sir, there's a gentleman below would speak with you.

Bob. A gentleman! 'ods so, I'm not within.

Tib. My husband told him you were, sir.

Bob. What a plague—what meant he?

Mat. [*Within.*] Captain Bobadil!

Bob. Who's there?—Take away the bason, good hostess. Come up, sir.

Tib. He would desire you to come up, sir. You come into a cleanly house here.

Enter Master MATTHEW.

Mat. 'Save you, sir; 'save you, captain.

Bob. Gentle Master Matthew! is it you, sir? Please you, sit down.

Mat. Thank you, good captain: you may see I am somewhat audacious.

Bob. Not so, sir. I was requested to supper, last night, by a sort of gallants, where you were wished for, and drank to, I assure you.

Mat. Vouchsafe me by whom, good captain.

Bob. Marry, by young Well-bred, and others. Why, hostess! a stool here for this gentleman.

Mat. No haste, sir, 'tis very well.

Bob. Body of me! It was so late ere we parted last night, I can scarce open my eyes yet: I was but new risen as you came. How passes the day abroad, sir? can you tell?

Mat. Faith, some half hour to seven. Now, trust me, you have an exceeding fine lodging here, very neat, and private!

Bob. Ay, sir: sit down. I pray you, Master Matthew, in any case, possess no gentleman of our acquaintance with notice of my lodging.

Mat. Who? I, sir! No.

Bob. Not that I need to care who know it, for the cabin is convenient; but in regard I would not be too popular and generally visited, as some are.

Mat. True, captain, I conceive you.

Bob. For, do you see, sir, by the heart of valour in me, except it be to some peculiar and choice spirits, to whom I am extraordinarily engaged, as yourself, or so, I could not extend thus far.

Mat. O lord, sir, I resolve so.

Bob. I confess, I love a cleanly and quiet privacy, above all the tumult and roar of fortune. What new book ha' you there? Read it. What! Go by, Hieronymo?

Mat. Aye, did you ever see it acted? Is't not well penn'd!

Bob. Well penn'd! I would fain see all the poets of these times pen such another play as that was! They'll prate and swagger, and keep a stir of art and devices, when, as I am a gentleman, read 'em, they are the most shallow, pitiful, barren fellows, that live upon the face of the earth again.

Mat. Indeed, here are a number of fine speeches in this book. 'Oh eyes, no eyes, but fountains fraught with tears!'—There's a conceit! Fountains fraught with tears! 'Oh, world, no world, but mass of public wrongs!'—A third, 'Confus'd and fill'd with murder and misdeeds!'—A fourth!—'Oh, the muses!' Is't not excellent? Is't not simply the best that ever you heard, captain; Ha! how do you like it?

Bob. 'Tis good.

Mat. [*Reads.*] 'To thee, the purest object of my sense,
'The most refined essence Heaven covers,
'Send I these lines, wherein I do commence
'The happy state of turtle-billing lovers.'
'If they prove rough, unpolished, harsh, and rude,
'Haste made the waste. Thus mildly I conclude.

Bob. 'Tis good; proceed, proceed. Where's this?

Mat. This, sir? a toy o' mine own, in my nonage: the infancy of my muses. But, when will you come and see my study? Good faith, I can shew you some very good things, I have done of late—That boot becomes your leg passing well, captain, methinks.

Bob. So, so; it's the fashion gentlemen now use.

Mat. Troth, captain, and now you speak o' the fashion, Master Well-bred's elder brother and I are fallen out exceedingly: this other day, I happened to enter into some discourse of a hanger, which, I assure you, both for fashion and workmanship, was most peremptory-beautiful, and gentleman-like; yet he condemned, and cried it down, for the most pied and ridiculous that ever he saw.

Bob. 'Squire Downright, the half-brother, was't not?

Mat. Ay, sir, George Downright.

Bob. Hang him, rook! He! why, he has no more judgment than a malt-horse. By St. George, I wonder you'd lose one thought upon such an animal! the most peremptory absurd clown of Christendom, this day, he is holden. I protest to you, as I am a gentleman and a soldier, I ne'er changed words with his like. By his discourse, he should eat nothing but hay. He was born for the manger, pannier, or packsaddle! He has not so much as a good phrase in his belly, but all old iron and rusty proverbs! a good commodity for some smith to make hobnails of.

Mat. Ay, and he thinks to carry it away with his manhood still, where he comes. He brags he will gi' me the bastinado, as I hear.

Bob. How! he the bastinado! how came he by that word, trow?

Mat. Nay, indeed, he said cudgel me; I termed it so, for my more grace.

Bob. That may be: for I was sure, it was none of his word. But when? when said he so?

Mat. Faith, yesterday, they say: a young gallant, a friend of mine, told me so.

Bob. By the foot of Pharaoh, an' 'twere my case, now, I should send him a challenge, presently. The bastinado! A most proper, and sufficient dependence, warranted by the great Caranea. Come hither, you shall challenge him; I'll shew you a trick or two, you shall kill him with, at pleasure: the first stoccata, if you will, by this air.

Mat. Indeed, you have absolute knowledge i' the mystery, I have heard, sir.

Bob. Of whom? Of whom ha' you heard it, I beseech you?

Mat. Troth, I have heard it spoken of by divers, that you have very rare and un-in-one-breath-utterable skill, sir.

Bob. By Heaven, no, not I; no skill i' the earth! some small rudiments i' the science, as to know my time, distance, or so. I have profest it more for noblemen and gentlemen's use than mine own practice, I assure you. Hostess, accommodate us with another bedstaff here, quickly; lend us another bedstaff! The woman does not understand the words of action. Look you, sir: exalt not your point above this state, at any hand, and let your poniard maintain your defence, thus; [*Enter Hostess with a bedstaff.*] Give it the gentleman, and leave us. So, sir. Come on! O, twine your body more about, that you may full to a more sweet, comely, gentleman-like guard. So, indifferent. Hollow your body more, sir, thus. Now, stand fast o' your left leg; note your distance; keep your due proportion of time—Oh, you disorder your point most irregularly!

Mat. How is the bearing of it now, sir?

Bob. Oh, out of measure ill! a well experienced hand would pass upon you at pleasure.

Mat. How mean you, sir, pass upon me?

Bob. Why thus, sir,—(make a thrust at me)—come in upon the answer, controul your point, and make a full career at the body. The best practis'd gallants of the time, nam. it a passada; a most desperate thrust, believe it!

Mat. Well, come sir!

Bob. Why, you do not manage your weapon with any grace or facility to invite me! I have no spirit to play with you. Your dearth of judgment renders you tedious.

Mat. But one venue, sir.

Bob. Venue! Fy! most gross denomination as ever I heard. Oh, the stoccata, while you live, sir: note that. Come, put on your cloak, and we'll go to a private place, where you are acquainted, some tavern, or so—and have a bit—I'll send for one of those fencers, and he shall breathe you, by my direction; and then I will teach you your trick. You shall kill him with it at the first, if you please. Why, I will learn you by the true judgment of the eye, hand, and foot, to controul any enemy's point i'th' world. Should your adversary confront you with a pistol, 'twere nothing, by this hand! You should by the same rule, controul his bullet in a line, except it were hail-shot, and spread. What money ha' you about you, master Matthew?

Mat. Faith, I have not past a two shillings, or so.

Bob. 'Tis somewhat with the least: but come, we will have a bunch of raddishes, and salt, to taste our wine; and a pipe of tobacco, to close the orifice of the stomach: and then we will call upon young Well-bred. Perhaps we shall meet the Corydon, his brother, there, and put him to the question. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Warehouse belonging to* KITELY.

Enter KITELY, CASH, *and* DOWNRIGHT.

Kite. Thomas, come hither.
There lies a note within, upon my desk;
Here, take my key———It is no matter, neither.
Where is the boy?

Cash. Within, sir, in the warehouse.

Kite. Let him tell over, straight, that Spanish gold,
And weigh it, with the pieces of eight. Do you
See the delivery of those silver stuffs
To Master Lucar. Tell him, if he will,
He shall have the grograns at the rate I told him,
And I will meet him, on the Exchange, anon.

Cash. Good, sir. [*Exit.*

Kite. Do you see that fellow, brother Downright?

Down. Ay, what of him?

Kite. He is a jewel, brother.—
I took him of a child, up, at my door,
And christened him; gave him my own name, Thomas;
Since bred him at the hospital; where proving
A toward imp, I called him home, and taught him
So much, as I have made him my cashier,
And given him, who had none, a surname, Cash;
And find him, in his place, so full of faith,
That I durst trust my life into his hands.

Down. So would not I, in any bastard's, brother,
As, it is like, he is, although I knew
Myself his father. But you said you'd somewhat
To tell me, gentle brother; what is't? what is't?

Kite. Faith, I am very loth to utter it,
As fearing it may hurt your patience:
But that, I know, your judgment is of strength,
Against the nearness of affection———

Down. What need this circumstance? Pray you, be direct.

Kite. I will not say how much I do ascribe
Unto your friendship; nor, in what regard
I hold your love; but, let my past behaviour,
And usage of your sister, but confirm
How well I've been affected to your—

Down. You are too tedious; come to the matter, the matter.

Kite. Then, without further ceremony, thus.
My brother Well-bred, sir, I know not how,
Of late, is much declined in what he was,
And greatly altered in his disposition.
When he came first to lodge, here, in my house,
Ne'er trust me, if I were not proud of him:
Methought he bare himself in such a fashion,
So full of man, and sweetness in his carriage.
And, what was chief, it shewed not borrowed in him,
But all he did became him as his own,
And seemed as perfect, proper, and possest,
As breath with life, or colour with the blood:
But now his course is so irregular,
So loose, affected, and deprived of grace,
And he himself, withall, so far fallen off
From that first place, as scarce no note remains,
To tell men's judgments where he lately stood.
He's grown a stranger to all due respect;
Forgetful of his friends; and, not content
To stale himself in all societies,
He makes my house, here, common as a mart,
A theatre, a public receptacle
For giddy humour, and diseased riot:
And here, as in a tavern or a stew,
He and his wild associates spend their hours
In repetition of lascivious jests:
Swear, leap, drink, dance, and revel night by night,
Controul my servants; and, indeed, what not!

Down. 'Sdains, I know not what I should say to him in the whole world! he values me at a cracked three-farthings, for aught I see. It will never out of the flesh, that's bred in the bone! I have told him enough, one would think, if that would serve. Well! he knows what to trust to, for George. Let him spend and spend, and domineer, till his heart ache; an' he think to be relieved by me, when he is got into one of your city-ponds, the counters, he has the wrong sow by the ear, i'faith, and claps his dish at a wrong man's door. I'll lay my hand o' my halfpenny, ere I part with it, to fetch him out, I'll assure him.

Kite. Nay, good brother, let it not trouble you thus.

Down. 'Sdeath, he mads me—I could eat my very spur-leathers, for anger! But, why are you so tame? Why do not you speak to him, and tell him how he disquiets your house?

Kite. O, there are divers reasons to dissuade, brother;
But, would yourself vouchsafe to travail in it,
Though but with plain and easy circumstance,
It would both come much better to his sense,
And savour less of stomach, or of passion.
You are his elder brother, and that title
Both gives and warrants your authority,
Which, by your presence seconded, must breed
A kind of duty in him, and regard:
Whereas, if I should intimate the least,
It would but add contempt to his neglect,
Heap worse on ill, make up a pile of hatred,
That, in the rearing, would come tottering down,
And in the ruin bury all our love.
Nay, more than this, brother; if I should speak,
He would be ready, from his heat of humour,
And overflowing of the vapour in him,
To blow the ears of his familiars
With the false breath of telling what disgraces
And low disparagements I had put upon him.
Whilst they, sir, to relieve him in the fable,
Make their loose comments upon every word,
Gesture, or look, I use; mock me all o'er,
From my flat cap, unto my shining shoes;
And, out of their impetuous rioting phantasies,
Beget some slander that shall dwell with me.
And what would that be, think you? Marry, this:
They would give out, because my wife is fair,
Myself but newly married, and my sister
Here sojourning a virgin in my house,
That I were jealous! Nay, as sure as death,
That they would say: and how that I had quarrelled
My brother purposely, thereby to find
An apt pretext to banish them my house.

Down. Mass, perhaps so: they're like enough to do it.

Kite. Brother, they would, believe it: so should I,
Like one of these penurious quack-salvers,
But set the bills up to mine own disgrace,
And try experiments upon myself;
Lend scorn and envy opportunity
To stab my reputation and good name.

Enter MATTHEW *and* BOBADIL.

Mat. I will speak to him——

Bob. Speak to him! Away! by the foot of Pharoah, you shall not; you shall not do him that grace. The time of day to you, gentleman of the house. Is Mr Well-bred stirring

Down. How, then? what should he do?

Bob. Gentleman of the house, it is to you: is he within, sir?

Kite. He came not to his lodgings to-night, sir, I assure you.

Down. Why, do you hear? you!

Bob. The gentleman-citizen hath satisfied me. I'll talk to no scavenger.

[*Exeunt* BOBADIL *and* MATTHEW.

Down. How! scavenger! stay, sir, stay!

Kite. Nay, brother Downright!

Down. 'Heart! stand you away, an' you love me.

Kite. You shall not follow him, now, I pray you, brother; good faith, you shall not: I will overrule you.

Down. Ha! scavenger! Well, go to, I say little: but, by this good day, (God forgive me I should swear), if I put up so, say, I am the rankest cow that ever passed. 'Sdains, and I swallow this, I'll ne'er draw my sword in the sight of Fleet-street again, while I live. I'll sit in a barn with Madge Howlet, and catch mice first. Scavenger! 'Heart, and I'll go near to fill that huge tumbrel-slop of yours, with somewhat, an' I have good luck. Your Garagantua breech cannot carry it away so.

Kite. Oh! do not fret yourself thus! never think on it.

Down. These are my brother's consorts, these! these are his comrades, his walking mates! he is a gallant, a cavaliero, too, right hangman cut! Let me not live, an' I could not find in my heart to swinge the whole gang of them, one after another, and begin with him first. I am grieved it should be said he is my brother, and take these courses. Well, as he brews, so he shall drink, for George, again. Yet, he shall hear on it, and that tightly, too, an' I live, in faith.

Kite. But, brother, let your reprehension, then,
Run in an easy current, not o'er high
Carried with rashness, or devouring choler;
But rather use the soft persuading way,
More winning than enforcing the consent.

Down. Ay, ay, let me alone for that, I warrant you. [*Bell rings.*

Kite. How now! Oh, the bell rings for breakfast.
Brother, I pray you, go in, and bear my wife
Company till I come; I'll but give order
For some dispatch of business to my servants.

[*Exit* DOWN.

Enter COB, *with a Tankard.*

Kite. What, Cob? our maids will have you by the back, i'faith,
For coming so late this morning.

Cob. Perhaps so, sir; take heed, somebody have not them by the belly, for walking so late in the evening.

Kite. Well, yet my troubled spirit's somewhat eased,
Though not reposed in that security
As I could wish: but, I must be content.
Howe'er I set a face on't to the world,
Would I had lost this finger, at a venture,
So Well-bred had ne'er lodged within my house.
Why, it cannot be, where there is such resort
Of wanton gallants, and young revellers,
That any woman should be honest long.
Is't like, that factious beauty will preserve
The public weal of chastity unshaken,
When such strong motives muster, and make head
Against her single peace? No, no. Beware.
When mutual appetite doth meet to treat,
And spirits of one kind and quality
Come once to parley, in the pride of blood,
It is no slow conspiracy that follows.
Well, to be plain, if I but thought the time
Had answered their affections, all the world
Should not persuade me, but I were a cuckold!
Marry, I hope they have not got that start;
For opportunity hath baulked them yet,
And shall do still, while I have eyes and ears
To attend the impositions of my heart.
My presence shall be as an iron-bar,
'Twixt the conspiring motions of desire:
Yea, every look or glance mine eyes eject,
Shall check occasion, as one doth his slave,
When he forgets the limits of prescription.

Enter Dame KITELY.

Dame. Sister Bridget, pray you fetch down the rose-water above in the closet. Sweetheart, will you come in to breakfast?

Kite. An' she have overheard me now! [*Aside.*

Dame. I pray thee, good muss, we stay for you.

Kite. By Heaven, I would not for a thousand angels. [*Aside.*

Dame. What ail you, sweetheart? are you not well? Speak, good muss.

Kite. Troth, my head aches extremely, on a sudden.

Dame. Oh, the lord!

Kite. How now! what!

Dame. Alas, how it burns! Muss, keep you warm; good truth it is this new disease! there's a number are troubled withal! For love's sake, sweetheart, come in out of the air.

Kite. How simple, and how subtle are her answers!
A new disease, and many troubled with it!
Why true! she heard me, all the world to nothing.

Dame. I pray thee, good sweetheart, come in; the air will do you harm, in troth.

Kite. The air! she has me in the wind! Sweetheart, I'll come to you presently; 'twill away, I hope.

Dame. Pray Heaven it do. [*Exit.*

Kite. A new disease! I know not new or old,
But it may well be called poor mortals' plague:
For, like a pestilence, it doth infect
The houses of the brain. First, it begins
Solely to work upon the phantasy,
Filling her seat with such pestiferous air
As soon corrupts the judgment, and from thence
Sends like contagion to the memory;
Still to each other giving the infection,

Which, as a subtle vapour, spreads itself
Confusedly through every sensive part,
Till not a thought, or motion in the mind,
Be free from the black poison of suspect.
Ah, but what misery it is to know this!
Or, knowing it, to want the mind's direction
In such extremes! Well, I will once more strive,
In spite of this black cloud, myself to be,
And shake the fever off, that thus shakes me.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Moorfields.*

Enter BRAIN-WORM, *disguised as a Soldier.*

Brain. 'Slid, I cannot choose but laugh to see myself translated thus. From a poor creature to a creator; for now must I create an intolerable sort of lies, or my present profession loses the grace; and yet the lie to a man of my coat, is as ominous a fruit as the Fico. O, sir, it holds for good polity ever, to have that outwardly in vilest estimation, that inwardly is most dear to us. So much for my borrowed shape.—Well, the troth is, my old master intends to follow my young, dry-foot, over Moorfields to London this morning: now I, knowing of this hunting-match, or rather conspiracy, and to insinuate with my young master (for so must we, that are blue-waiters, and men of hope and service do, or perhaps we may wear motley at the year's end, and who wears motley, you know,) have got me afore in this disguise, determining here to lie in ambuscade, and intercept him in the mid-way. If I can but get his cloak, his purse, his hat, nay any thing to cut him off, that is, to stay his journey—*Veni, vidi, vici*, I may say with captain Cæsar; I am made for ever, i'faith. Well, now must I practise to get the true garb of one of those lance-knights, my arm here, and my—Young master! and his cousin, master Stephen, as I am a true counterfeit man of war, and no soldier! [*Retires.*

Enter ED. KNO'WELL *and Master* STEPHEN.

E. Kno. So, sir, and how then, coz?

Step. S'foot, I have lost my purse, I think.

E. Kno. How! lost your purse! Where!—When had you it?

Step. I cannot tell: stay.

Brain. 'Slid, I am afraid they will know me! Would I could get by them!

E. Kno. What, ha' you it?

Step. No, I think I was bewitched, I——

E. Kno. Nay, do not weep the loss; hang it, let it go.

Step. Oh, 'tis here—No, an' it had been lost, I had not cared, but for a jet ring Mistress Mary sent me.

E. Kno. A jet ring! oh, the poesy, the poesy!

Step. Fine, i'faith! '*Though fancy sleep, my love is deep;*' meaning, that though I did not fancy her, yet she loved me dearly.

E. Kno. Most excellent!

Step. And, then, I sent her another, and my poesy was: '*The deeper the sweeter, I'll be judged by St Peter.*'

E. Kno. How by St Peter? I do not conceive that.

Step. Marry, St Peter, to make up the metre.

E. Kno. Well, there the saint was your good patron; he helped you at your need: thank him, thank him.

Brain. I cannot take leave of them so; I will venture, come what will.——Gentlemen, please you change a few crowns, for a very excellent good blade, here? I am a poor gentleman, a soldier, one that, in the better state of my fortunes, scorned so mean a refuge, but now it is the humour of necessity to have it so. You seem to be, gentlemen, well affected to martial men, else should I rather die with silence than live with shame: however, vouchsafe to remember, it is my want speaks, not myself. This condition agrees not with my spirit.

E. Kno. Where hast thou served?

Brain. May it please you, sir, in all the late wars of Bohemia, Hungaria, Dalmatia, Poland; where not, sir? I have been a poor servitor by sea and land, any time these fourteen years, and followed the fortunes of the best commanders in Christendom. I was twice shot at the taking of Aleppo, once at the relief of Vienna; I have been at Marseilles, Naples, and the Adriatic Gulf; a gentleman-slave in the galleys thrice, where I was most dangerously shot in the head, through both the thighs, and yet being thus maimed, I am void of maintenance; nothing left me but my scars, the noted marks of my resolution.

Step. How will you sell this rapier, friend?

Brain. Generous sir, I refer it to your own judgment; you are a gentleman, give me what you please.

Step. True, I am a gentleman, I know that, friend: but what though? I pray you say, what would you ask?

Brain. I assure you the blade may become the side, or thigh, of the best prince in Europe.

E. Kno. Aye, with a velvet scabbard, I think.

Step. Nay, an't be mine, it shall have a velvet scabbard, coz, that's flat: I would not wear it as 'tis, an' you would give me an angel.

Brain. At your worship's pleasure, sir; nay, 'tis a most pure Toledo.

Step. I had rather it were a Spaniard; but tell me, what shall I give you for it? An' it had a silver hilt——

E. Kno. Come, come, you shall not buy it; hold, there's a shilling, fellow; take thy rapier.

Step. Why, but I will buy it now, because you say so; and there's another shilling, fellow, I scorn to be outbidden. What, shall I walk with a cudgel, like a higginbottom, and may have a rapier for money?

E. Kno. You may buy one in the city.

Step. Tut, I'll buy this i' the field, so I will; I have a mind to't, because 'tis a field rapier. Tell me your lowest price.

E. Kno. You shall not buy it, I say.

Step. By this money but I will, though I give more than 'tis worth.

E. Kno. Come away, you are a fool.

Step. Friend, I am a fool, that's granted: but I'll have it for that word's sake. Follow me for your money.

Brain. At your service, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

Kno. I cannot lose the thought yet of this letter,
Sent to my son; nor leave to admire the change
Of manners, and the breeding of our youth
Within the kingdom, since myself was one.
When I was young, he lived not in the stews,
Durst have conceived a scorn, and uttered it,
On a grey head: age was authority
Against a buffoon; and a man had then
A certain reverence paid unto his years,
That had none due unto his life. So much
The sanctity of some prevailed for others.
But now we are fallen; youth from their fear,
And age from that, which bred it, good example.
Nay, would ourselves were not the first, even parents,
That did destroy the hopes in our own children;
Or they not learned our vices in their cradles,
And suck'd in our ill customs with their milk.
Ere all their teeth be born, or they can speak,
We make their pallats cunning. The first words
We form their tongues with, are licentious jests.
Can it call whore? Cry bastard? O, then kiss it,
A witty child! Can't swear? The father's darling!
Give it two plums. Nay, rather than it shall learn
No bawdy song, the mother herself will teach it!
But this is in the infancy; the days
Of the long coat: when it puts on the breeches,
It will put off all this. Ay, it is like;
When it is gone into the bone already!
No, no: this dye goes deeper than the coat,
Or shirt, or skin; it stains unto the liver
And heart, in some: and rather than it should not,
Note what we fathers do! look how we live!
What mistresses we keep! at what expence!
In our son's eyes! Where they may handle our gifts,
Hear our lascivious courtships, see our dalliance,
Taste of the same provoking meats with us,
To ruin of our state! Nay, when our own
Portion is fled, to prey on their remainder,
We call them into fellowship of vice:
Bait 'em with the young chambermaid to seal,
And teach 'em all bad ways to buy affection.
This is one path; but there are millions more,
In which we spoil our own, with leading them.
Well, I thank Heaven, I never yet was he,
That travelled with my son before sixteen,
To shew him the Venetian courtezans,
Nor read the grammar of cheating, I had made,
To my sharp boy at twelve; repeating still
The rule, get money, still get money, boy,
No matter by what means. Money will do
More, boy, than my lord's letter. Neither have I
Drest snails or mushrooms curiously before him,
Perfum'd my sauces, and taught him to make 'em;
Preceding still with my gray gluttony,
At all the ord'naries, and only fear'd
His palate should degenerate, not his manners.
These are the trades of fathers now. However,
My son, I hope, hath met within my threshold
None of these household precedents; which are strong
And swift, to rape youth to their precipice.
But let the house at home be ne'er so clean
Swept, or kept sweet from filth, nay dust and cobwebs,
If he will live abroad with his companions,
In dung and leystals, it is worth a fear,
Nor is the danger of conversing less
Than all that I have mentioned of example.

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. My master! nay, faith, have at you; I am fleshed now, I have sped so well; though I must attack you in a different way.—Worshipful sir, I beseech you, respect the state of a poor soldier! I am ashamed of this base course of life, (God's my comfort) but extremity provokes me to't: what remedy?

Kno. I have not for you.

Brain. By the faith I bear unto truth, gentleman, it is no ordinary custom in me, but only to preserve manhood. I protest to you, a man I have been, a man I may be, by your sweet bounty.

Kno. Prithee, good friend, be satisfied.

Brain. Good sir, by that hand you may do the part of a kind gentleman, in lending a poor soldier the price of two cans of beer, a matter of small value; the King of Heaven shall pay you, and I shall rest thankful: sweet worship—

Kno. Nay, an' you be so importunate—

Brain. Oh, tender sir, need will have his course! I was not made to this vile use! Well, the edge of the enemy could not have abated me so much. [*He weeps.*] It's hard, when a man hath served in his prince's cause, to be thus—honourable worship, let me derive a small piece of silver from you; it shall not be given in the course of time. By this good ground, I was fain to pawn my rapier last night for a poor supper; I had sucked the hilt long before, I am a pagan else: sweet honour!

Kno. Believe me, I am taken with some wonder,
To think a fellow of thy outward presence,
Should, in the frame and fashion of his mind,
Be so degenerate and sordid base!
Art thou a man, and sham'st thou not to beg?
To practise such a servile kind of life?
Why, were thy education ne'er so mean,
Having thy limbs, a thousand fairer courses
Offer themselves to thy election.
Either the wars might still supply thy wants,
Or service of some virtuous gentleman,
Or honest labour: nay, what can I name,

But would become thee better than to beg!
But men of thy condition feed on sloth,
As doth the beetle on the dung she breeds in,
Not caring how the metal of your minds
Is eaten with the rust of idleness.
Now, afore me, whate'er he be, that should
Relieve a person of thy quality,
While thou insist in this loose desperate course,
I would esteem the sin not thine, but his.

Brain. Faith, sir, I would gladly find some other course, if so——

Kno. Aye, you would gladly find it, but you will not seek it.

Brain. Alas! sir, where should a man seek? in the wars there's no ascent by desert in these days, but—and for service, would it were as soon purchased as wished for! (the air's my comfort) I know what I would say——

Kno. What's thy name?

Brain. Please you, Fitz-Sword, sir.

Kno. Fitz-Sword,
Say that a man should entertain thee now,
Would'st thou be honest, humble, just, and true?

Brain. Sir, by the place and honour of a soldier——

Kno. Nay, nay, I like not those affected oaths! Speak plainly, man: what think'st thou of my words?

Brain. Nothing, sir, but wish my fortunes were as happy, as my service should be honest.

Kno. Well, follow me; I will prove thee, if thy deeds will carry a proportion to thy words. [*Exit.*

Brain. Yes, sir, straight: I will but garter my hose. Oh! that my belly were hooped now, for I am ready to burst with laughing! Never was a bottle or bag-pipe fuller. S'lid! was there ever seen a fox in years to betray himself thus? Now I shall be possessed of all his counsels! and by that conduct my young master. Well, he is resolved to prove my honesty; faith, and I am resolved to prove his patience. Oh, I shall abuse him intolerably! This small piece of service will bring him clean out of love with the soldier for ever. He will never come within the sight of a red coat, or a musket-rest again. He will hate the musters at Mile-end to his dying day. It's no matter; let the world think me a bad counterfeit, if I cannot give him the slip at an instant. Why, this is better than to have staid his journey! Well, I will follow him. Oh, how I long to be employed! [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Stocks-Market.*

Enter MATTHEW, WELL-BRED, *and* BOBADIL.

Mat. Yes, faith, sir! we were at your lodging to seek you too.

Well. Oh, I came not there to-night.

Bob. Your brother delivered us as much.

Well. Who? My brother Down-right?

Bob. He. Mr Well-bred, I know not in what kind you hold me; but let me say to you this: as sure as honour, I esteem it so much out of the sunshine of reputation, to throw the least beam of regard upon such a———

Well. Sir, I must hear no ill words of my brother.

Bob. I protest to you, as I have a thing to be saved about me, I never saw any gentleman-like part—

Well. Good captain, [*faces about.*] to some other discourse.

Bob. With your leave, sir, an' there were no more men living upon the face of the earth, I should not fancy him, by St George.

Mat. Troth, nor I; he is of a rustical cut, I know not how: he doth not carry himself like a gentleman of fashion———

Well. Oh, Master Matthew, that is a grace peculiar but to a few, *quos æquus amavit Jupiter.*

Mat. I understand you, sir.

Enter Young KNO'WELL *and* STEPHEN.

Well. No question you do, or you do not, sir. Ned Kno'well! By my soul, welcome! How dost thou, sweet spirit, my genius? 'Slid, I shall love Apollo and the mad Thespian girls the better, while I live for this, my dear fury. Now I see there's some love in thee! Sirrah, these be the two I writ to thee of. Nay, what a drowsy humour is this now! Why dost thou not speak?

E. Kno. Oh, you are a fine gallant; you sent me a rare letter.

Well. Why, was it not rare?

E. Kno. Yes, I'll be sworn; I was never guilty of reading the like. Match it in all Pliny's epistles, and I'll have my judgment burned in the ear for a rogue; make much of thy vein, for it is inimitable. But I marvel what camel it was that had the carriage of it, for, doubtless, he was no ordinary beast that brought it.

Well. Why?

E. Kno. Why, sayest thou? Why, dost thou think that any reasonable creature, especially in the morning, the sober time of the day too, could have mistaken my father for me?

Well. 'Slid, you jest, I hope.

E. Kno. Indeed, the best use we can turn it to, is to make a jest on't now; but I'll assure you, my father had the full view of your flourishing style, before I saw it.

Well. What a dull slave was this! But, sirrah, what said he to it, i'faith?

E. Kno. Nay, I know not what he said: but I have a shrewd guess what he thought.

Well. What, what?

E. Kno. Marry, that thou art some strange, dissolute young fellow, and I not a grain or two better, for keeping thee company.

Well. Tut! that thought is like the moon in

her last quarter, 'twill change shortly. But, sirrah, I pray thee be acquainted with my two hang-bys here; thou wilt take exceeding pleasure in them, if thou hearest them once go: my wind-instruments. I'll wind them up——But what strange piece of silence is this? The sign of the dumb man?

E. Kno. Oh, sir, a kinsman of mine, one that may make your music the fuller, an' he please; he has his humour, sir.

Well. Oh, what is't, what is't?

E. Kno. Nay, I'll neither do your judgment, nor his folly, that wrong, as to prepare your apprehension. I'll leave him to the mercy of your search, if you can take him so.

Well. Well. Captain Bobadil, Master Matthew, I pray you know this gentleman here; he is a friend of mine, and one that will deserve your affection. I know not your name, sir, but shall be glad of any occasion to render me more familiar to you.

Step. My name is Master Stephen, sir; I am this gentleman's own cousin, sir: his father is mine uncle, sir; I am somewhat melancholy, but you shall command me, sir, in whatsoever is incident to a gentleman.

Bob. Sir, I must tell you this, I am no general man; but for Mr Well-bred's sake (you may embrace it at what height of favour you please) I do communicate with you; and conceive you to be a gentleman of some parts. I love few words.

E. Kno. And I fewer, sir. I have scarce enow to thank you.

Mat. But are you indeed, sir, so given to it? [*To Master* STEPHEN.

Step. Ay, truly, sir, I am mightily given to melancholy.

Mat. Oh, it is your only fine humour, sir; your true melancholy breeds your perfect fine wit, sir: I am melancholy myself, divers times, sir; and then do I no more but take a pen and paper presently, and overflow you half a score or a dozen of sonnets at a sitting.

E. Kno. Sure he utters them then by the gross. [*Aside.*

Step. Truly, sir, and I love such things out of measure.

E. Kno. I'faith, better than in measure, I'll undertake.

Mat. Why, I pray you, sir, make use of my study, it's at your service.

Step. I thank you, sir, I shall be bold, I warrant you; have you a stool there to be melancholy upon?

Mat. That I have, sir, and some papers of my own doing, at idle hours, that you'll say there's some sparks of wit in 'em, when you see 'em.

Well. Would the sparks would kindle once, and become a fire among 'em, I might see self-love burnt for her heresy.

Step. Cousin, is it well? am I melancholy enough?

E. Kno. O, ay, excellent!

Well. Captain Bobadil, why muse you so?

E. Kno. He is melancholy, too.

Bob. Faith, sir, I was thinking of a most honourable piece of service was performed to-morrow, being St Mark's day, shall be some ten years now.

E. Kno. In what place, captain?

Bob. Why, at the beleaguering of Strigonium, where, in less than two hours, seven hundred resolute gentlemen, as any were in Europe, lost their lives upon the breach. I'll tell you, gentlemen; it was the first, but the best leaguer, that ever I beheld with these eyes, except the taking of——what do you call it, last year, by the Genoese; but that (of all others) was the most fatal and dangerous exploit that ever I was ranged in, since I first bore arms before the face of the enemy, as I am a gentleman and a soldier.

Step. 'So, I had as lief as an angel, I could swear as well as that gentleman!

E. Kno. Then you were a servitor at both, it seems; at Strigonium, and what do you call it?

Bob. Oh, lord, sir! by St George, I was the first man that entered the breach; and had I not effected it with resolution, I had been slain, if I had had a million of lives.

E. Kno. It was a pity you had not ten; a cat's, and your own, i'faith. But was it possible?

Mat. Pray you, mark this discourse, sir.

Step. So I do.

Bob. I assure you, upon my reputation, it is true, and yourself shall confess.

E. Kno. You must bring me to the rack first.

Bob. Observe me judicially, sweet sir: they had planted me three demi-culverins, just in the mouth of the breach: now, sir, as we were to give on, their master-gunner (a man of no mean skill and mark, you must think) confronts me with his linstock, ready to give fire: I, spying his intendment, discharged my petrionel in his bosom, and with these single arms, my poor rapier, ran violently upon the Moors that guarded the ordnance, and put them all, pell-mell, to the sword.

Well. To the sword! to the rapier, captain!

E. Kno. Oh, it was a good figure observed, sir! but did you all this, captain, without hurting your blade?

Bob. Without any impeach o' the earth: you shall perceive, sir. It is the most fortunate weapon that ever rid on poor gentleman's thigh. Shall I tell you, sir? You talk of Morglay, Excalibar, Durindana, or so? Tut, I lend no credit to what is fabled of them; I know the virtue of mine own, and therefore I dare the bolder maintain it.

Step. I marvel whether it be a Toledo, or no.

Bob. A most perfect Toledo, I assure you, sir.

Step. I have a countryman of his here.

Mat. Pray you, let's see, sir. Yes, faith, it is!

Bob. This a Toledo! pish.

Step. Why do you pish, captain?

Bob. A Fleming, by Heaven! I'll buy them for a guilder a-piece, an' I would have a thousand of them.

E. Kno. How say you, cousin? I told you thus much.

Well. Where bought you it, Master Stephen?

Step. Of a scurvy rogue soldier (a hundred of lice go with him); he swore it was a Toledo.

Bob. A poor provant rapier, no better.

Mat. Mass, I think it be, indeed! now I look on't better.

E. Kno. Nay, the longer you look on't the worse. Put it up, put it up!

Step. Well, I will put it up; but by——(I have forgot the captain's oath, I thought to have sworn by it) an' e'er I meet him——

Well. O, 'tis past help now, sir; you must have patience.

Step. Whoreson coney-catching rascal! I could eat the very hilts for anger.

E. Kno. A sign of good digestion; you have an ostrich stomach, cousin.

Step. A stomach! I would I had him here! you should see an' I had a stomach.

Well. It is better as it is. Come, gentlemen, shall we go?

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

E. Kno. A miracle, cousin! look here! look here!

Step. O, god'slid, by your leave, do you know me, sir?

Brain. Ay, sir, I know you by sight.

Step. You sold me a rapier, did you not?

Brain. Yes, marry, did I, sir.

Step. You said it was a Toledo, ha?

Brain. True, I did so.

Step. But it is none!

Brain. No, sir, I confess it is none.

Step. Do you confess it? Gentlemen, bear witness, he has confessed it. By God's will, an' you had not confessed it——

E. Kno. Oh, cousin, forbear, forbear.

Step. Nay, I have done, cousin.

Well. Why, you have done like a gentleman; he has confessed it, what would you more?

Step. Yet, by his leave, he is a rascal, under his favour, do you see.

E. Kno. Ay, by his leave, he is, and under favour. A pretty piece of civility! Sirrah, how dost like him?

Well. Oh, it's a most precious fool, make much of him. I can compare him to nothing more happily, than a drum; for every one may play upon him.

E. Kno. No, no, a child's whistle were far the fitter.

Brain. Sir, shall I entreat a word with you?

E. Kno. With me, sir! You have not another Toledo to sell, have you?

Brain. You are conceited, sir; your name is Master Kno'well, as I take it?

E. Kno. You are in the right. You mean not to proceed in the catechism, do you?

Brain. No, sir, I am none of that coat.

E. Kno. Of as bare coat, though. Well, say, sir?

Brain. Faith, sir, I am but a servant to the drum extraordinary; and indeed, this smoky varnish being washed off, and three or four patches removed, I appear your worship's in reversion, after the decease of your good father—Brain-worm.

E. Kno. Brain-worm! 'Slight, what breath of a conjurer hath blown thee hither in this shape?

Brain. The breath o' your letter, sir, this morning: the same, that blew you to the Windmill, and your father after you.

E. Kno. My father!

Brain. Nay, never start; 'tis true; he has followed you over the fields by the foot, as you would do a hare i' the snow.

E. Kno. Sirrah, Well-bred, what shall we do, sirrah? My father is come over after me.

Well. Thy father! Where is he?

Brain. At justice Clement's house, here, in Coleman-street, where he but stays my return; and then—

Well. Who's this? Brain-worm?

Brain. The same, sir.

Well. Why, how, i' the name of wit, com'st thou transmuted thus?

Brain. Faith, a device! a device! Nay, for the love of reason, gentlemen, and avoiding the danger, stand not here; withdraw, and I'll tell you all.

Well. But art thou sure he will stay thy return?

Brain. Do I live, sir? what a question is that!

Well. We'll prorogue his expectation, then, a little. Brain-worm, thou shalt go with us. Come on, gentlemen; nay, I pray thee, sweet Ned, droop not. 'Heart, an' our wits be so wretchedly dull, that one old plotting brain can outstrip us all, would we were e'en pressed to make porters of, and serve out the remnant of our days in Thames-street, or at Customhouse-key, in a civil war against the car-men.

Brain. Amen, amen, amen, say I. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The Warehouse.*

Enter KITELY *and* CASH.

Kite. What says he, Thomas? Did you speak with him?

Cash. He will expect you, sir, within this half hour.

Kite. Has he the money ready? Can you tell?

Cash. Yes, sir, the money was brought in last night.

Kite. O, that's well: fetch me my cloak, my cloak.
Stay, let me see; an hour to go and come;
Ay, that will be the least; and then 'twill be
An hour before I can dispatch with him,
Or very near: well, I will say two hours.
Two hours! ha! things, never dreamt of yet,
May be contrived, ay, and effected too,
In two hours absence. Well, I will not go.
Two hours! No, fleering opportunity!
I will not give your subtlety that scope.
Who will not judge him worthy to be robbed,
That sets his doors wide open to a thief,
And shews the felon where his treasure lies?
Again, what earthly spirit but will attempt

To taste the fruit of beauty's golden tree,
When leaden sleep seals up the dragon's eyes?
I will not go. Business, go by for once.
No, beauty, no; you are of too good caract
To be left so, without a guard, or open!
Your lustre too'll inflame at any distance,
Draw courtship to you, as a jet doth straws;
Put motion in a stone, strike fire from ice,
Nay, may a porter leap you with his burden.
You must be then kept up close, and well watch'd!
For, give you opportunity, no quick-sand
Devours or swallows swifter! He, that lends
His wife, if she be fair, or time, or place,
Compels her to be false. I will not go.
The dangers are too many. And then the dressing
Is a most main attractive! Our great heads
Within the city, never were in safety
Since our wives wore those little caps: I'll change 'em,
I'll change 'em straight in mine. Mine shall no more
Wear three-piled acorns, to make my horns ake.
Nor will I go. I am resolved for that.
Carry in my cloak again. Yet stay. Yet, do too.
I will defer going, on all occasions.
Cash. Sir, Snare, your scrivener, will be there with the bonds.
Kite. That's true! fool on me! I had clean forgot it! I must go. What's o'clock?
Cash. Exchange time, sir.
Kite. 'Heart! then will Well-bred presently be here too,
With one or other of his loose consorts.
I am a knave, if I know what to say,
What course to take, or which way to resolve.
My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,
Wherein my imagination runs, like sands,
Filling up time; but then are turned, and turned;
So that I know not what to stay upon,
And less to put in act. It shall be so.
Nay, I dare build upon his secrecy;
He knows not to deceive me. Thomas!
Cash. Sir.
Kite. Yet now, I have bethought too, I will not—
Thomas, is Cob within?
Cash. I think he be, sir.
Kite. But he'll prate too—there's no speech of him.
No, there were no man o' the earth to Thomas,
If I durst trust him; there is all the doubt.
But should he have a chink in him, I were gone,
Lost in my fame for ever: talk for the Exchange.
The manner he hath stood with, 'till this present,
Doth promise no such change; what should I fear then?
Well, come what will, I'll tempt my fortune once.
Thomas—you may deceive me, but I hope—
Your love to me is more—
Cash. Sir, if a servant's
Duty, with faith, may be called love, you are
More than in hope, you are possessed of it.
Kite. I thank you heartily, Thomas; give me your hand:
With all my heart, good Thomas. I have, Thomas,
A secret to impart to you—but
When once you have it, I must seal your lips up:
So far I tell you, Thomas.
Cash. Sir, for that——
Kite. Nay, hear me out. Think, I esteem you, Thomas,
When I will let you in thus to my private.
It is a thing sits nearer to my crest,
Than thou art aware of, Thomas. If thou should'st
Reveal it, but——
Cash. How! I reveal it!
Kite. Nay,
I do not think thou would'st: but if thou should'st,
'Twere a great weakness.
Cash. A great treachery.
Give it no other name.
Kite. Thou wilt not do it, then?
Cash. Sir, if I do, mankind disclaim me ever!
Kite. He will not swear; he has some reservation,
Some concealed purpose, and close meaning, sure.
Else, being urged so much, how should he choose
But lend an oath to all this protestation?
He's no precisian, that I'm certain of,
Nor rigid Roman Catholic. He'll play
At Fayle's, and at tick-tack. I have heard him swear.
What should I think of it? Urge him again,
And by some other way? I will do so.
Well, Thomas, thou hast sworn not to disclose;
Yes, you did swear?
Cash. Not yet, sir, but I will,
Please you——
Kite. No, Thomas, I dare take thy word;
But if thou wilt swear, do—as thou think'st good;
I am resolved without it: at thy pleasure.
Cash. By my soul's safety, then, sir, I protest
My tongue shall ne'er take knowledge of a word,
Delivered me in nature of your trust.
Kite. It is too much; these ceremonies need not;
I know thy faith to be as firm as rock.
Thomas, come hither, near; we cannot be
Too private in this business. So it is,—
(Now he has sworn, I dare the safelier venture)
I have of late, by divers observations—
But whether his oath can bind him, yea or no,
Being not taken lawfully? Ha! say you?
I will ask counsel ere I do proceed.
Thomas, it will be now too long to stay;
I'll spy some fitter time soon, or to-morrow.
Cash. Sir, at your pleasure.
Kite. I will think. And, Thomas,
I pray you search the books, 'gainst my return,
For the receipts 'twixt me and Traps.
Cash. I will, sir.
Kite. And, hear you, if your mistress's brother, Well-bred,
Chance to bring hither any gentlemen,
Ere I come back, let one straight bring me word.
Cash. Very well, sir.
Kite. To the Exchange; do you hear?
Or here in Coleman-street, to Justice Clement's.

Forget it not, nor be out of the way.
Cash. I will not, sir.
Kite. I pray you have a care on't.
Or whether he come or no, if any other
Stranger, or else, fail not to send me word.
Cash. I shall not, sir.
Kite. Be it your special business
Now to remember it.
Cash. Sir, I warrant you.
Kite. But, Thomas, this is not the secret, Thomas,
I told you of.
Cash. No, sir, I do suppose it.
Kite. Believe me, it is not.
Cash. Sir, I do believe you.
Kite. By Heaven! it is not, that's enough. But, Thomas,
I would not you should utter it, do you see,
To any creature living; yet I care not.
Well, I must hence. Thomas, conceive thus much;
It was a trial of you, when I meant
So deep a secret to you: I mean not this,
But that I have to tell you. This is nothing, this.
But, Thomas, keep this from my wife, I charge you.
Locked up in silence, midnight, buried here—
No greater hell than to be slave to fear. [*Exit.*
Cash. Locked up in silence, midnight, buried here!
Whence should this flood of passion, trow, take heed? ha?
Best dream no longer of this running humour,
For fear I sink! the violence of the stream
Already hath transported me so far,
That I can feel no ground at all! But soft,
Here is company: now must I— [*Exit.*

Enter WELL-BRED, EDW. KNO'WELL, BRAIN-WORM, BOBADIL, STEPHEN.

Well. Beshrew me, but it was an absolute good jest, and exceedingly well carried.
E. Kno. Ay, and our ignorance maintained it as well, did it not?
Well. Yes, faith; but was it possible thou should'st not know him? I forgive Master Stephen, for he is stupidity itself.
E. Kno. 'Fore God, not I, an' I might ha' been join'd patent with one of the seven wise masters for knowing him. He had so written himself into the habit of one of your poor infantry, your decayed, ruinous, worm-eaten gentlemen of the round; such as have vowed to sit on the skirts of the city, like your provost and his half-dozen of halbardiers, do what they can; and have translated begging out of the old hackney pace, to a fine easy amble, and make it run as smooth on the tongue as a shove-groat shilling. Into the likeness of one of these reformado's had he moulded himself so perfectly, observing every trick of their action, as varying the accent, swearing with an emphasis, indeed all with so special and exquisite a grace, that (hadst thou seen him,) thou would'st have sworn he might have been serjeant-major, if not lieutenant-colonel, of the regiment.
Well. Why, Brain-worm, who would have thought thou had'st been such an artificer?
E. Kno. An artificer? an architect! Except a man had studied begging all his life-time, and been a weaver of language from his infancy, for the clothing of it—I never saw his rival.
Well. Where got'st thou this coat, I marvel!
Brain. Of a Houndsditch man, sir, one of the devil's near kinsmen, a broker.
Well. That cannot be, if the proverb hold, for a crafty knave needs no broker.
Brain. True, sir, but I did need a broker: *ergo*—
Well. Well put off.—No crafty knave, you'll say.
E. Kno. Tut, he has more of these shifts.
Brain. And yet where I have one, the broker has ten, sir.

Enter CASH.

Cash. Francis! Martin! ne'er a one to be found now? What a spite's this?
Well. How now, Thomas, is my brother Kitely within?
Cash. No, sir; my master went forth e'en now; but master Downright is within. Cob! what! Cob! Is he gone too?
Well. Whither went your master, Thomas, can't thou tell?
Cash. I know not; to Justice Clement's, I think, sir. Cob! [*Exit* CASH.
E. Kno. Justice Clement! What's he?
Well. Why, dost thou not know him? He is a city magistrate, a justice here; an excellent good lawyer, and a great scholar; but the only mad and merry old fellow in Europe! I shewed you him the other day.
E. Kno. Oh, is that he? I remember him now. Good faith! and he has a very strange presence, methinks; it shews as if he stood out of the rank from other men. I have heard many of his jests in the university. They say, he will commit a man for taking the wall of his horse.
Well. Ay, or wearing his cloak on one shoulder, or serving of God. Any thing, indeed, if it come in the way of his humour.

Enter CASH.

Cash. Gasper, Martin, Cob! 'Heart! where should they be, trow?
Bob. Master Kitely's man, prithee vouchsafe us the lighting of this match.
Cash. Fire on your match, no time but now to vouchsafe! [*Aside.*] Francis! Cob!
Bob. Body of me! Here's the remainder of seven pound since yesterday was seven-night. It is your right Trinidado! Did you never take any, Master Stephen?
Step. No, truly, sir! but I'll learn to take it now, since you commend it so.
Bob. Sir, believe me, upon my relation; for what I tell you, the world shall not reprove. I have been in the Indies, where this herb grows, where neither myself, nor a dozen gentlemen more, of my knowledge, have received the taste of any other nutriment in the world, for the

space of one and twenty weeks, but the fume of this simple only. Therefore it cannot be, but 'tis most divine. Further, take it in the nature, in the true kind, so it makes an antidote, that had you taken the most deadly poisonous plant in all Italy, it should expel it, and clarify you, with as much ease as I speak. And for your green-wound, your balsamum, and your St John's wort, are all mere gulleries and trash to it, especially your Trinadado; your Nicotian is good too. I could say what I know of the virtue of it, for the expulsion of rheums, raw humours, crudities, obstructions, with a thousand of this kind; but I profess myself no quacksalver. Only thus much; by Hercules, I do hold it, and will affirm it before any prince in Europe, to be the most sovereign and precious weed, that ever the earth tendered to the use of man.

E. Kno. This speech would have done decently in a tobacco-trader's mouth.

Enter CASH *and* COB.

Cash. At Justice Clement's he is, in the middle of Coleman-Street.

Cob. O, ho!

Bob. Where's the match I gave thee, Master Kitely's man?

Cash. Would his match and he, and pipe and all, were at Sancto Domingo! I had forgot it.

Cob. But God's me, I marle what pleasure or felicity they have in taking this roguish tobacco! it is good for nothing but to choke a man, and fill him full of smoke and embers. There were four died out of one house last week with taking of it, and two more the bell went for yesternight; one of them (they say,) will ne'er 'scape it; he voided a bushel of soot yesterday, upward and downward. By the stocks, an there were no wiser men than I, I'd have it present whipping, man or woman, that should but deal with a tobacco-pipe. Why it will stifle them all in the end, as many as use it. It's little better than ratsbane or rosacker.

[BOBADIL *beats him with a cudgel*, MATTHEW *runs away.*

All. Oh, good captain! hold! hold!

Bob. You base scullion, you.

Cash. Come, thou must need be talking too; thour't well enough served.

Cob. Nay, he will not meddle with his match, I warrant you. Well, it shall be a dear beating; an' I live, I will have justice for this.

Bob. Do you prate? Do you murmur?

[BOBADIL *beats him off.*

E. Kno. Nay, good captain, will you regard the humour of a fool?

Well. Thomas, get him away.

Bob. A whoreson filthy slave, a dung-worm, an excrement! Body o' Cæsar, but that I scorn to let forth so mean a spirit, I'd have stabbed him to the earth.

Well. Marry, the law forbid, sir.

Bob. By Pharaoh's foot, I would have done it. [*Exit.*

Step. Oh, he swears admirably! By Pharaoh's foot, body of Cæsar! I shall never do it, sure; upon mine honour, and by St George! no, I have not the right grace.

Mat. Master Stephen, will you any? By this air, the most divine tobacco that ever I drunk!

Step. None, I thank you, sir. Oh, this gentleman does it rarely too, but nothing like the other. By this air, as I am a gentleman: by—

Brain. Master, glance, glance! Master Wellbred.

Step. As I have somewhat to be saved, I protest. [*Practising at a post.*

Well. You are a fool, it needs no affidavit.

E. Kno. Cousin, will you any tobacco?

Step. Aye, sir! Upon my reputation——

E. Kno. How now, cousin!

Step. I protest, as I am a gentleman, but no soldier, indeed—

Well. No, Master Stephen? As I remember your name is entered in the Artillery Garden.

Step. Aye, sir, that's true. Cousin, may I swear, 'as I am a soldier;' by that?

E. Kno. O yes, that you may; it's all you have for your money.

Step. Then, as I am a gentleman, and a soldier, it is divine tobacco.

Well. But soft, where is Mr Mathew? gone!

Brain. No, sir: they went in here.

Well. O, let us follow them: Master Matthew is gone to salute his mistress in verse. We shall have the happiness to hear some of his poetry now. He never comes unfurnished. Brain-worm?

Step. Brain-worm? Where is this Brain-worm?

E. Kno. Ay, cousin, no words of it, upon your gentility.

Step. Not I, body of me! by this air, St George, and the foot of Pharaoh!

Well. Rare! your cousin's discourse is simply drawn out with oaths.

E. Kno. 'Tis larded with them. A kind of French dressing, if you love it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Hall in Justice* CLEMENT'S *House.*

Enter KITELY *and* COB.

Kite. Ha? How many are there, say'st thou?

Cob. Marry, sir, your brother, Master Wellbred—

Kite. Tut, beside him: what strangers are there, man?

Cob. Strangers! let me see; one, two—mass, I know not well, there are so many.

Kite. How, so many!

Cob. Ay, there are some five or six of them, at the most.

Kite. A swarm, a swarm!
Spite of the devil! how they sting my head
With forked stings, thus wide and large! But, Cob,
How long hast thou been coming hither, Cob?

Cob. A little while, sir.

Kite. Didst thou come running?

Cob. No, sir.

Kite. Nay, then I am familiar with thy haste!

Bane to my fortunes! What meant I to marry?
I, that before was ranked in such content,
My mind at rest too in so soft a peace,
Being free master of my own free thoughts,
And now become a slave? What, never sigh!
Be of good cheer, man, for thou art a cuckold.
'Tis done, 'tis done! Nay, when such flowing store,
Plenty itself, falls into my wife's lap,
The cornucopia will be mine, I know. But, Cob,
What entertainment had they? I am sure
My sister and my wife would bid them welcome! Ha!

Cob. Like enough, sir; yet I heard not a word of it.

Kite. No; their lips were sealed with kisses, and the voice,
Drowned in a flood of joy at their arrival,
Had lost her motion, state, and faculty.
Cob, which of them was't that first kissed my wife?
My sister, I should say, my wife, alas!
I fear not her. Ha! Who was it, say'st thou?

Cob. By my troth, sir, will you have the truth of it?

Kite. Ay, good Cob, I pray thee heartily.

Cob. Then I am a vagabond, and fitter for Bridewell than your worship's company, if I saw any body to be kissed, unless they would have kissed the post in the middle of the warehouse; for there I left them all, at their tobacco, with a pox!

Kite. How! were they not gone in then, ere thou cam'st?

Cob. O, no, sir!

Kite. Spite of the devil! What do I stay here then? Cob, follow me. [*Exit.*

Cob. Nay, soft and fair, I have eggs on the spit. Now am I, for some five and fifty reasons, hammering, hammering revenge! Nay, an' he had not lain in my house, 'twould never have grieved me; but being my guest, one that, I'll be sworn, I loved and trusted, and he, to turn monster of ingratitude, and strike his lawful host! Well, I hope to raise up an host of fury for it. I'll to Justice Clement for a warrant. Strike his lawful host! [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* KITELY'S *House.*

Enter DOWNRIGHT *and Dame* KITELY.

Down. Well, sister, I tell you true; and you will find it so, in the end.

Dame. Alas, brother, what would you have me to do? I cannot help it. You see my brother brings them in here; they are his friends.

Down. His friends! his friends! 'Slud, they do nothing but haunt him up and down, like a sort of unlucky spirits, and tempt him to all manner of villany that can be thought of. Well, by this light, a little thing would make me play the devil with some of them. An' 'twere not more for your husband's sake, than any thing else, I'd make the house too hot for the best of them. They should say, and swear, hell were broken loose, ere they went hence. But, by God's will, 'tis nobody's fault but yours; for an' you had done as you might have done, they should have been parboiled, and baked too, every mother's son, ere they should ha' come in e'er a one of them.

Dame. God's my life! did you ever hear the like? What a strange man is this! Could I keep out all them, think you? I should put myself against half a dozen men, should I? Good faith, you'd mad the patient'st body in the world, to hear you talk so without any sense or reason.

Enter Mrs BRIDGET, *Master* MATTHEW, WELL-BRED, STEPHEN, EDWARD KNO'WELL, BOBADIL, *and* CASH.

Bridget. Servant, in troth, you are too prodigal
Of your wit's treasure, thus to pour it forth
Upon so mean a subject as my worth.

Mat. You say well, mistress; and I mean as well.

Down. Hey-day, here is stuff!

Well. O, now stand close. Pray Heaven she can get him to read; he should do it of his own natural impudence.

Bridg. Servant, what is this same, I pray you?

Mat. Marry, an elegy! an elegy! an odd toy—

Down. To mock an ape withal. O, I could sew up his mouth now.

Dame. Sister, I pray you let's hear it.

Down. Are you rhyme-given too?

Mat. Mistress, I'll read it if you please.

Bridg. Pray you do, servant.

Down. O, here's no foppery! Death! I can endure the stocks better.

E. Kno. What ails thy brother? Can he not bear the reading of a ballad?

Well. O, no: a rhyme to him is worse than cheese, or a bag-pipe. But, mark, you lose the protestation.

Bob. Master Matthew, you abuse the expectation of your dear mistress, and her fair sister. Fie, while you live avoid this prolixity.

Mat. I shall, sir.
Rare creature! let me speak without offence:
Would Heaven my rude words had the influence
To rule thy thoughts, as thy fair looks do mine,
Then shouldst thou be his prisoner, who is thine.

[*Master* STEPHEN *answers with shaking his head.*]

E. Kno. 'Slight, he shakes his head like a bottle, to feel an' there be any brain in it!

Well. Sister, what ha' you here? Verses?—Pray you, let us see. Who made these verses? They are excellent good.

Mat. O, Master Well-bred, 'tis your disposi-

tion to say so, sir. They were good in the morning; I made them extempore this morning.

Well. How extempore?

Mat. I would I might be hanged else; ask Captain Bobadil. He saw me write them at the ——(pox on it) the Star yonder.

Step. Cousin, how do you like this gentleman's verses?

E. Kno. O, admirable! the best that ever I heard, coz!

Step. Body of Cæsar! they are admirable!—The best that ever I heard, as I am a soldier!

Dow. I am vext! I can hold ne'er a bone of me still! Heart, I think they mean to build and breed here.

Well. Sister Kitely, I marvel you get you not a servant, that can rhime, and do tricks too.

Dow. Oh, monster! Impudence itself! tricks! Come, you might practise your ruffian tricks somewhere else, and not here, I wuss. This is no tavern, nor drinking-school, to vent your exploits in.

Well. How now! whose cow has calved?

Dow. Marry, that has mine, sir. Nay, boy, never look askance at me for the matter; I will tell you of it: aye, sir, you and your companions; mend yourselves when I ha' done.

Well. My companions!

Dow. Yes, sir, your companions, so I say: I am not afraid of you nor them neither, your hangbys here. You must have your poets, and your potlings, your soldados and foolados, to follow you up and down the city, and here they must come to domineer and swagger. Sirrah, you ballad-singer; and Slops, your fellow there, get you out; get you home; or, by this steel, I'll cut off your ears, and that presently.

Well. 'Slight, stay, let us see what he dare do. Cut off his ears! cut a whetstone. You are an ass, do you see; touch any man here, and by this hand, I'll run my rapier to the hilts in you.

Dow. Yea, that would I fain see, boy.

[*They all draw, and they of the house make out to part them.*]

Dame. O, Jesu! murder! Thomas, Gasper!

Bridg. Help, help, Thomas.

E. Kno. Gentlemen, forbear, I pray you.

Bob. Well, sirrah! you Holofernes! by my hand, I will pink your flesh full of holes with my rapier, for this; I will, by this good Heaven.—Nay, let him come, gentlemen, by the body of St George, I'll not kill him.

[*They offer to fight again, and are parted.*

Cash. Hold, hold, good gentlemen.

Dow. You whoreson, bragging coistril!

Enter KITELY.

Kite. Why, how now, what's the matter?—
What's the stir here?
Put up your weapons, and put off this rage.
My wife and sister, they're the cause of this.
What, Thomas! where is the knave?

Cash. Here, sir.

Well. Come, let us go; this is one of my brother's ancient humours, this. [*Exit.*

Step. I am glad nobody was hurt by his ancient humour. [*Exit.*

Kite. Why, how now, brother, who enforced this brawl?

Dow. A sort of lewd rake-hells, that care neither for God nor the devil. And they must come here to read ballads, and roguery, and trash! I'll mar the knot of them ere I sleep, perhaps; especially Bob there: he that is all manner of shapes; and songs and sonnets, his fellow. But I'll follow them. [*Exit.*

Bridg. Brother, indeed, you are too violent,
Too sudden in your humour.
There was one a civil gentleman,
And very worthily demeaned himself.

Kite. O, that was some love of yours, sister.

Bridg. A love of mine! I would it were no worse, brother! You'd pay my portion sooner than you think for. [*Exit.*

Dame. Indeed, he seemed to be a gentleman of exceeding fair disposition, and of very excellent good parts. What a coil and stir is here! [*Exit.*

Kite. Her love, by Heaven! my wife's minion!
Death, these phrases are intolerable!
Well, well, well, well, well, well!
It is too plain, too clear. Thomas, come hither.
What, are they gone?

Cash. Ay, sir, they went in.
My mistress, and your sister——

Kite. Are any of the gallants within?

Cash. No, sir, they are all gone.

Kite. Art thou sure of it?

Cash. I can assure you, sir.

Kite. What gentleman was it that they praised so, Thomas?

Cash. One, they call him Master Kno'well, a handsome young gentleman, sir.

Kite. Aye, I thought so. My mind gave me as much.
I'll die but they have hid him in the house
Somewhere; I will go and search. Go with me, Thomas;
Be true to me, and thou shalt find me a master.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Moorfields.*

Enter E. KNO'WELL, WELL-BRED, *and* BRAINWORM.

E. Kno. Well, Brain-worm, perform this business happily, and thou makest a purchase of my love for ever.

Well. In faith, now let thy spirits use their best faculties; but at my hand, remember the message to my brother; for there is no other means to start him out of his house.

Brain. I warrant you, sir, fear nothing. I have a nimble soul has waked all forces of my phantasy by this time, and put them in true motion. What you have possessed me withal, I'll discharge it amply, sir. Make it no question. [*Exit.*

Well. Forth, and prosper, Brain-worm. Faith,

Ned, how dost thou approve of my abilities in this device?

E. Kno. Troth, well, howsoever: but it will come excellent, if it take.

Well. Take, man! Why, it cannot choose but take, if the circumstances miscarry not. But tell me ingenuously, dost thou affect my sister Bridget as thou pretendest?

E. Kno. Friend, am I worth belief?

Well. Come, do not protest. In faith, she is a maid of good ornament, and much modesty; and except I conceived very worthily of her, thou should'st not have her.

E. Kno. Nay, that, I am afraid, will be a question yet, whether I shall have her or no.

Well. 'Slid thou shalt have her; by this light, thou shalt.

E. Kno. Nay, do not swear.

Well. By this hand, thou shalt have her. I will go fetch her presently. Point but where to meet, and, as I am an honest man, I will bring her.

E. Kno. Hold, hold, be temperate.

Well. Why, by ——, what shall I swear by? thou shalt have her, as I am ——

E. Kno. Pray thee, be at peace; I am satisfied, and do believe thou wilt omit no offered occasion to make my desires complete.

Well. Thou shalt see, and know I will not.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter FORMAL *and* KNO'WELL.

Form. Was your man a soldier, sir?

Kno. Aye, a knave; I took him begging o' the way,
This morning, as I came over Moorfields.

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Oh, here he is! you have made fair speed, believe me.
Where, in the name of sloth, could you be thus—

Brain. Marry, peace be my comfort, where I thought I should have had little comfort of your worship's service.

Kno. How so?

Brain. Oh, sir! your coming to the city, your entertainment of me, and your sending me to watch——indeed, all the circumstances either of your charge, or my employment, are as open to your son, as to yourself.

Kno. How should that be! unless that villain, Brain-worm,
Have told him of the letter, and discovered
All that I strictly charged him to conceal? 'Tis so.

Brain. I am partly o' that faith; 'tis so, indeed.

Kno. But how should he know you to be my man?

Brain. Nay, sir, I cannot tell; unless it be by the black art! Is not your son a scholar, sir?

Kno. Yes, but I hope his soul is not allied
Unto such hellish practice; if it were,
I had just cause to weep my part in him,
And curse the time of his creation.
But where didst thou find them, Fitz-Sword?

Brain. You should rather ask, where they found me, sir; for I will be sworn I was going along in the street, thinking nothing, when (of a sudden) a voice calls, 'Mr Kno'well's man;' another cries, 'soldier;' and thus, half a dozen of them, till they had called me within a house, where I no sooner came, but out flew all their rapiers at my bosom, with some three or fourscore oaths to accompany them, and all to tell me, I was a dead man, if I did not confess where you were, and how I was employed, and about what; which, when they could not get out of me, (as I protest they must have dissected me, and made an anatomy of me first, and so I told them), they locked me up into a room i' the top of a high house, whence, by great miracle, having a light heart, I slid down by a bottom of packthread into the street, and so escaped. But, sir, thus much I can assure you; for I heard it while I was locked up; there were a great many rich merchants, and brave citizens' wives with them, at a feast, and your son, Mr Edward, withdrew with one of them, and has appointed to meet her anon, at one Cob's house, a water-bearer, that dwells by the wall. Now, there your worship shall be sure to take him; for there he preys, and fail he will not.

Kno. Nor will I fail to break his match, I doubt not.
Go thou along with justice Clement's man,
And stay there for me. At one Cob's house,
say'st thou?

Brain. Aye, sir, there you shall have him. [*Exit* KNO'WELL.] Yes! invisible! much wench, or much son! 'Slight, when he has staid there three or four hours, travailling with the expectation of wonders, and at length be delivered of air! O, the sport that I should then take to look on him, if I durst! But now I mean to appear no more before him in this shape. I have another trick to act yet. [*To* FORMAL.] Sir, I make you stay somewhat long.

Form. Not a whit, sir;
You have been lately in the wars, sir, it seems?

Brain. Marry have I, sir, to my loss, and expence of all, almost——

Form. Troth, sir, I would be glad to bestow a bottle of wine on you, if it please you to accept it——

Brain. O, sir——

Form. But to hear the manner of your services, and your devices, in the wars; they say they be very strange, and not like those a man reads in the Roman histories, or sees at Mile-End.

Brain. No, I assure you, sir; why, at any time, when it please you, I shall be ready to discourse with you all I know; and more too, somewhat.

Form. No better time than now, sir. We will go to the Windmill, there we shall have a cup of neat grist, as we call it. I pray you, sir, let me request you to the Windmill.

Brain. I will follow you, sir, and make grist of you, if I have good luck. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MATTHEW, EDWARD KNO'WELL, BOBADIL, *and* STEPHEN.

Mat. Sir, did your eyes ever taste the like clown of him, where we were to-day, Mr Wellbred's half brother? I think the whole earth cannot shew his parallel, by this day-light.

E. Kno. We are now speaking of him. Captain Bobadil tells me he is fallen foul of you too.

Mat. O aye, sir! he threatened me with the bastinado.

Bob. Aye, but I think I taught you prevention this morning for that—You shall kill him beyond question, if you be so generously minded.

Mat. Indeed, it is a most excellent trick!

Bob. O, you do not give spirit enough to your motion; you are too tardy, too heavy! O, it must be done like lightning; hey!

[*He practises at a post.*

Mat. Rare captain!

Bob. Tut, 'tis nothing, an't be done in a—punto!

E. Kno. Captain, did you ever prove yourself upon any of our masters of defence here?

Mat. O, good sir! yes, I hope he has.

Bob. I will tell you, sir. They have assaulted me some three, four, five, six of them together, as I have walked alone in divers skirts of the town, where I have driven them before me the whole length of a street, in the open view of all our gallants, pitying to hurt them, believe me. Yet all this lenity will not overcome their spleen; they will be doing with the pismire, raising a hill, a man may spurn abroad with his foot at pleasure. By myself, I could have slain them all; but I delight not in murder. I am loth to bear any other than this bastinado for them; yet I hold it good policy not to go disarmed; for, though I be skilful, I may be oppressed with multitudes.

E. Kno. Aye, believe me, may you, sir; and, in my conceit, our whole nation should sustain the loss by it, if it were so.

Bob. Alas, no! What's a peculiar man to a nation? Not seen.

E. Kno. O, but your skill, sir!

Bob. Indeed, that might be some loss; but who respects it? I will tell you, sir, by the way of private, and under seal, I am a gentleman, and live here obscure, and to myself: but were I known to his majesty, and the lords, observe me, I would undertake, upon this poor head and life, for the public benefit of the state, not only to spare the entire lives of his subjects in general, but to save the one-half, nay, three-parts of his yearly charge in holding war, and against what enemy soever. And how would I do it, think you?

E. Kno. Nay, I know not, nor can I conceive.

Bob. Why thus, sir. I would select nineteen more to myself, throughout the land; gentlemen they should be, of good spirit, strong and able constitution; I would chuse them by an instinct, a character that I have; and I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as, your Punto, your Reverso, your Stoccata, your Imbroccata, your Passada, your Montanto; till they could all play very near, or altogether, as well as myself. This done, say the enemy were forty thousand strong; we twenty would come into the field the tenth of March, or thereabouts; and we would challenge twenty of the enemy; they could not, in their honour, refuse us! Well, we would kill them; challenge twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them; twenty more, kill them too; and thus would we kill every man his twenty a-day, that's twenty score; twenty score, that's two hundred; two hundred a-day, five days a thousand; forty thousand; forty times five, five times forty, two hundred days, kill them all up by computation. And this I will venture my poor gentleman-like carcase to perform, provided there be no treason practised upon us, by fair and discreet manhood, that is, civilly, by the sword.

E. Kno. Why, are you sure of your hand, captain, at all times?

Bob. Tut, never miss thrust, upon my reputation with you.

E. Kno. I would not stand in Downright's state, then, an' you meet him, for the wealth of any one street in London.

Bob. Why, sir, you mistake! If he were here now, by this welkin, I would not draw my weapon on him! Let this gentleman do his mind: but I will bastinado him, by the bright sun, wherever I meet him.

Mat. Faith, and I'll have a fling at him, at my distance.

Enter DOWNRIGHT, *walking over the Stage.*

E. Kno. God's so! look ye where he is; yonder he goes.

Dow. What peevish luck have I, I cannot meet with these bragging rascals!

Bob. It's not he, is it?

E. Kno. Yes, faith, it is he!

Mat. I'll be hanged then, if that were he.

E. Kno. I assure you that was he.

Step. Upon my reputation, it was he.

Bob. Had I thought it had been he, he must not have gone so: but I can hardly be induced to believe it was he yet.

E. Kno. That I think, sir. But see, he is come again!

Dow. O, Pharaoh's foot! have I found you? Come, draw; to your tools. Draw, gipsey, or I'll thresh you.

Bob. Gentleman of valour, I do believe in thee; hear me——

Dow. Draw your weapon, then.

Bob. Tall man, I never thought on't till now; body of me! I had a warrant of the peace served on me even now, as I came along, by a water-bearer: this gentleman saw it, master Matthew.

[*He beats him, and disarms him.* MATTHEW *runs away.*]

Dow. 'Sdeath, you will not draw, then?

Bob. Hold, hold, under thy favour, forbear.

Dow. Prate again, as you like this, you whoreson foist you. You will controul the point, you! Your consort is gone; had he staid, he had shared with you, sir. [*Exit* DOWNRIGHT.

E. Kno. Twenty, and kill them; twenty more, kill them too. Ha, ha!

Bob. Well, gentlemen, bear witness, I was bound to the peace, by this good day.

E. Kno. No, faith, it's an ill day, captain; never reckon it other: but say you were bound to the peace; the law allows you to defend yourself; that will prove but a poor excuse.

Bob. I cannot tell, sir. I desire good construction, in fair sort. I never sustained the like disgrace, by Heaven. Sure I was struck with a planet thence, for I had no power to touch my weapon.

E. Kno. Aye, like enough, I have heard of many that have been beaten under a planet. Go, get you to a surgeon. 'Slid, an' these be your tricks, your passados, and your montantos, I'll none of them.

Bob. I was planet-struck, certainly. [*Exit.*

E. Kno. O, manners! that this age should bring forth such creatures! that nature should be at leisure to make them! Come, coz.

Step. Mass, I'll have this cloak.

E. Kno. God's will, 'tis Downright's.

Step. Nay, it is mine now; another might have taken it up as well as I. I'll wear it, so I will.

E. Kno. How an' he see it? He'll challenge it, assure yourself.

Step. Aye, but he shall not have it; I'll say I bought it.

E. Kno. Take heed you buy it not too dear, coz. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Chamber in* KITELY'S *House.*

Enter KITELY *and* CASH.

Kite. Art thou sure, Thomas, we have pryed into all and every part throughout the house? Is there no bye-place, or dark corner, has escaped our searches?

Cash. Indeed, sir, none; there's not a hole or nook unsearched by us, from the upper loft unto the cellar.

Kite. They have conveyed him, then, away, or hid him in some privacy of their own——Whilst we were searching of the dark closet by my sister's chamber, didst thou not think thou heardst a rustling on the other side, and a soft tread of feet?

Cash. Upon my truth, I did not, sir; or if you did, it might be only the vermin in the wainscot; the house is old, and over-run with them.

Kite. It is, indeed, Thomas—we should bane these rats—Dost thou understand me—we will—they shall not harbour here; I'll cleanse my house from them, if fire or poison can effect it—I will not be tormented thus—They gnaw my brain, and burrow in my heart—I cannot bear it.

Cash. I do not understand you, sir! Good now, what is it disturbs you thus? Pray, be composed; these starts of passion have some cause, I fear, that touches you more nearly.

Kite. Sorely, sorely, Thomas—it cleaves too close to me—Oh me—[*Sighs.*] Lend me thy arm—so, good Cash.

Cash. You tremble, and look pale! Let me call assistance.

Kite. Not for ten thousand worlds——Alas! alas! it is not in medicine to give me ease—here, here it lies.

Cash. What, sir?

Kite. Why,—nothing, nothing—I am not sick, yet more than dead; I have a burning fever in my mind, and long for that, which, having, would destroy me.

Cash. Believe me, 'tis your fancy's imposition; shut up your generous mind from such intruders—I'll hazard all my growing favour with you; I'll stake my present, my future welfare, that some base whispering knave—nay, pardon me, sir—hath, in the best and richest soil, sown seeds of rank and evil nature! O, my master, should they take root— [*Laughing within.*

Kite. Hark! hark! dost thou not hear! what think'st thou now? Are they not laughing at me? They are, they are. They have deceived the wittol, and thus they triumph in their infamy—This aggravation is not to be borne. [*Laughing again.*] Hark, again!—Cash, do thou, unseen, steal in upon them, and listen to their wanton conference.

Cash. I shall obey you, though against my will. [*Exit.*

Kite. Against his will! Ha! it may be so—He's young, and may be bribed for them—they've various means to draw the unwary in: if it be so, I'm lost, deceived, betrayed; and my bosom, my full-fraught bosom, is unlocked and opened to mockery and laughter! Heaven forbid! He cannot be that viper; sting the hand, that raised and cherished him! Was this stroke added, I should be cursed. But it cannot be; no, it cannot be.

Enter CASH.

Cash. You are musing, sir.

Kite. I ask your pardon, Cash—ask me not why—I have wronged you, and am sorry—'tis gone.

Cash. If you suspect my faith—

Kite. I do not—say no more—and, for my sake, let it die and be forgotten—Have you seen your mistress, and heard—whence was that noise?

Cash. Your brother, Master Well-bred, is with them, and I found them throwing out their mirth on a very truly ridiculous subject; it is one Formal, as he stiles himself, and he appertains, so he phrases it, to Justice Clement, and would speak with you.

Kite. With me! Art thou sure it is the justice's clerk? Where is he?

Enter BRAIN-WORM *as* FORMAL.

Who are you, friend?

Brain. An appendix to Justice Clement, vulgarly called his clerk.

Kite. What are your wants with me?

Brain. None.

Kite. Do you not want to speak with me?
Brain. No, but my master does.
Kite. What are the justice's commands?
Brain. He doth not command, but entreats Master Kitely to be with him directly, having matters of some moment to communicate unto him.
Kite. What can it be? Say, I'll be with him instantly; and if your legs, friend, go no faster than your tongue, I shall be there before you.
Brain. I will. Vale! [*Exit.*
Kite. 'Tis a precious fool, indeed!—I must go forth—But first, come hither, Thomas—I have admitted thee into the close recesses of my heart, and shewed thee all my frailties, passions, every thing.—
Be careful of thy promise, keep good watch.
Wilt thou be true, my Thomas?
Cash. As truth's self, sir—
But be assured you're heaping care and trouble
Upon a sandy base; ill-placed suspicion
Recoils upon yourself—She's chaste as comely!
Believe it, she is——Let her not note your humour;
Disperse the gloom upon your brow, and be
As clear as her unsullied honour.
Kite. I will, then, Cash—thou comfortest me—I'll drive these
Fiend-like fancies from me, and be myself again.
Think'st thou, she has perceived my folly? 'Twere
Happy, if she had not—She has not—
They, who know no evil, will suspect none.
Cash. True, sir, nor has your mind a blemish now.
This change has gladdened me—Here's my mistress,
And the rest; settle your reason to accost them.
Kite. I will, Cash, I will—

Enter WELL-BRED, *Dame* KITELY, *and* BRIDGET.

Well. What are you plotting, brother Kitely,
That thus of late you muse alone, and bear
Such weighty care upon your pensive brow?
[*Laughs.*
Kite. My care is all for you, good sneering brother;
And well I wish, you'd take some wholesome counsel,
And curb your headstrong humours; trust me, brother,
You were to blame to raise commotions here,
And hurt the peace and order of my house.
Well. No harm done, brother, I warrant you.
Since there is no harm done, anger costs
A man nothing, and a brave man is never
His own man, till he be angry—To keep
His valour in obscurity, is to keep himself,
As it were, in a cloak-bag. What's a brave
Musician unless he play?
What's a brave man unless he fight?
Dame. Aye, but what harm might have come of it, brother?
Well. What, schooled on both sides! Pr'ythee, Bridget, save me from the rod and lecture.
[BRIDG. *and* WELL. *retire.*
Kite. With what a decent modesty she rates him!
My heart's at ease, and she shall see it is—
How art thou, wife? Thou look'st both gay and comely.
In troth thou dost. I'm sent for out, my dear,
But I shall soon return. Indeed, my life,
Business, that forces me abroad, grows irksome.
I could content me with less gain and 'vantage,
To have thee more at home; indeed I could.
Dame. Your doubts, as well as love, may breed these thoughts.
Kite. That jar untunes me. [*Aside.*
What dost thou say? Doubt thee!
I should as soon suspect myself—No, no,
My confidence is rooted in thy merit,
So fixed and settled, that, wert thou inclined
To masks, to sports, and balls, where lusty youth
Leads up the wanton dance, and the raised pulse
Beats quicker measures, yet I could with joy,
With heart's ease and security—not but
I had rather thou should'st prefer thy home,
And me, to toys and such like vanities.
Dame. But sure, my dear,
A wife may moderately use these pleasures,
Which numbers and the time give sanction to,
Without the smallest blemish on her name.
Kite. And so she may—And I'll go with thee, child;
I will indeed—I'll lead thee there myself,
And be the foremost reveller. I'll silence
The sneers of Envy, stop the tongue of Slander;
Nor will I more be pointed at, as one
Disturbed with jealousy——
Dame. Why, were you ever so?
Kite. What!—Ha! never—ha, ha, ha!
She stabs me home. [*Aside.*] Jealous of thee!
No, do not believe it—Speak low, my love,
Thy brother will overhear us—No, no, my dear.
It could not be, it could not be—for—for—
What is the time now? I shall be too late—
No, no, thou may'st be satisfied
There's not the smallest spark remaining—
Remaining! What do I say? There never was,
Nor can, nor ever shall be—so be satisfied—
Is Cob within there? Give me a kiss,
My dear; there, there, now we are reconciled—
I'll be back immediately—Good-bye, good-bye—
Ha! ha! jealous, I shall burst my sides with laughing,
Ha, ha! Cob, where are you, Cob? Ha, ha!—
[*Exit.*
[WELL-BRED *and* BRIDGET *come forward.*
Well. What have you done to make your husband part so merry from you? He has of late been little given to laughter.
Dame. He laughed indeed, but seemingly without mirth. His behaviour is new and strange. He is much agitated, and has some whimsy in his head, that puzzles mine to read it.
Well. 'Tis jealousy, good sister, and writ so largely, that the blind may read it; have you not perceived it yet?
Dame. If I have, 'tis not always prudent, that my tongue should betray my eyes; so far my

wisdom tends, good brother, and little more I boast—but what makes him ever calling for Cob so? I wonder how he can employ him.

Well. Indeed, sister, to ask how he employs Cob, is a necessary question for you, that are his wife, and a thing not very easy for you to be satisfied in—But this I'll assure you, Cob's wife is an excellent bawd, sister, and oftentimes your husband haunts her house; marry, to what end I cannot altogether accuse him. Imagine you, what you think convenient. But I have known fair hides have foul hearts ere now, sister.

Dame. Never said you truer than that, brother; so much I can tell you for your learning. O, ho! is this the fruit of his jealousy? I thought some game was in the wind, he acted so much tenderness but now; but I'll be quit with him.—Thomas!

Enter CASH.

Fetch your hat, and go with me: I'll get my hood, and out the backward-way. I would to fortune I could take him there! I'd return him his own, I warrant him! I'd fit him for his jealousy!

[*Exeunt.*

Well. Ha, ha! so e'en let them go; this may make sport anon—What, Brain-worm?

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. I saw the merchant turn the corner, and came back to tell you, all goes well; wind and tide, my master.

Well. But how got'st thou this apparel of the justice's man?

Brain. Marry, sir, my proper fine penman would needs bestow the grist o' me at the Windmill, to hear some martial discourse, where I so marshalled him, that I made him drunk with admiration; and because too much heat was the cause of his distemper, I stript him stark naked, as he lay along asleep, and borrowed his suit to deliver this counterfeit message in, leaving a rusty armour, and an old brown bill, to watch him 'till my return; which shall be, when I have pawned his apparel, and spent the better part of the money, perhaps.

Well. Well, thou art a successful merry knave, Brain-worm; his absence will be subject for more mirth. I pray thee return to thy young master, and will him to meet me and my sister Bridget at the Tower instantly; for here, tell him, the house is so stored with jealousy, there is no room for love to stand upright in. We must get our fortunes committed to some large prison, say: and then the Tower, I know no better air, nor where the liberty of the house may do us more present service. Away. [*Exit* BRAIN.

Bridg. What, is this the engine, that you told me of? What farther meaning have you in the plot?

Well. That you may know, fair sister-in-law, how happy a thing it is to be fair and beautiful.

Bridg. That touches not me, brother.

Well. That's true; that's even the fault of it; for, indeed, beauty stands a woman in no stead, unless it procure her touching—Well, there's a dear and well-respected friend of mine, sister, stands very strongly and worthily affected towards you, and hath vowed to inflame whole bonfires of zeal at his heart, in honour of your perfections. I have already engaged my promise to bring you, where you shall hear him confirm much more. Ned Kno'well is the man, sister.—There's no exception against the party; you are ripe for a husband, and a minute's loss on such an occasion is a great trespass in a wise beauty. What say you, sister? On my soul, he loves you; will you give him the meeting?

Bridg. Faith, I had very little confidence in my own constancy, brother, if I durst not meet a man: but this motion of yours savours of an old knight adventurer's servant a little too much methinks.

Well. What's that, sister?

Bridg. Marry, of the go-between.

Well. No matter if it did; I would be such a one for my friend. But see, who has returned to hinder us.

Enter KITELY.

Kite. What villany is this? Called out on a false message! This was some plot; I was not sent for. Bridget, where's your sister?

Bridg. I think she be gone forth, sir.

Kite. How! is my wife gone forth? Whither, for Heaven's sake?

Bridg. She's gone abroad with Thomas.

Kite. Abroad with Thomas! Oh, that villain cheats me!
He has discovered all unto my wife;
Beast that I was to trust him! Whither, I pray
You, went she?

Bridg. I know not, sir.

Well. I'll tell you, brother, whither I suspect she's gone.

Kite. Whither, good brother?

Well. To Cob's house, I believe; but keep my counsel.

Kite. I will, I will. To Cob's house! Does she haunt there?
She's gone on purpose now to cuckold me,
With that lewd rascal, who, to win her favour,
Hath told her all—Why would you let her go?

Well. Because she's not my wife: if she were, I'd keep her to her tether.

Kite. So, so; now 'tis plain. I shall go mad
With my misfortunes; now they pour in torrents.
I'm bruted by my wife, betrayed by my servant,
Mocked at by my relations, pointed at by my neighbours,
Despised by myself.—There is nothing left now,
But to revenge myself first, next hang myself;
And then—all my cares will be over. [*Exit.*

Bridg. He storms most loudly; sure you have gone too far in this.

Well. 'Twill all end right, depend upon it—But let us lose no time; the cost is clear; away, away; the affair is worth it, and cries haste.

Bridg. I trust me to your guidance, brother, and so fortune for us. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Stocks-Market.*

Enter MATTHEW *and* BOBADIL.

Mat. I wonder, captain, what they will say of my going away? ha!

Bob. Why, what should they say? but as of a discreet gentleman; quick, wary, respectful of nature's fair lineaments, and that is all.

Mat. Why so! but what can they say of your beating?

Bob. A rude part, a touch with soft wood, a kind of gross battery used, laid on strongly, borne most patiently, and that is all. But wherefore do I make their remembrance? I was fascinated, by Jupiter! fascinated; but I will be unwitched, and revenged by law.

Mat. Do you hear? Is it not best to get a warrant, and have him arrested, and brought before justice Clement?

Bob. It were not amiss; would we had it!

Mat. Why, here comes his man; let us speak to him.

Bob. Agreed. Do you speak.

Enter BRAIN-WORM *as* FORMAL.

Mat. Save you, sir.

Brain. With all my heart, sir!

Mat. Sir, there is one Downright hath abused this gentleman and myself, and we determine to make ourselves amends by law; now, if you would do us the favour to procure a warrant to bring him before your master, you shall be well considered of, I assure you, sir.

Brain. Sir, you know my service is my living; such favours as these, gotten of my master, is his only preferment, and therefore you must consider me, as I may make benefit of my place.

Mat. How is that, sir?

Brain. Faith, sir, the thing is extraordinary, and the gentleman may be of great account. Yet, be what he will, if you will lay me down a brace of angels in my hand, you shall have it; otherwise not.

Mat. How shall we do, captain? He asks a brace of angels; you have no money?

Bob. Not a cross, by fortune.

Mat. Nor I, as I am a gentleman, but two-pence left of my two shillings in the morning for wine and raddish. Let us find him some pawn.

Bob. Pawn! we have none to the value of his demand.

Mat. O, yes, I can pawn my ring here.

Bob. And, harkee, he shall have my trusty Toledo too. I believe I shall have no service for it to-day.

Mat. Do you hear, sir? We have no store of money at this time, but you shall have good pawns; look you, sir, I will pledge this ring, and that gentleman his Toledo, because we would have it dispatched.

Brain. I am content, sir; I will get you the warrant presently. What is his name, say you? Downright?

Mat. Ay, ay, George Downright.

Brain. Well, gentlemen, I will procure you the warrant presently; but who will you have to serve it?

Mat. That is true, captain, that must be considered.

Bob. Body of me, I know not! 'Tis service of danger!

Brain. Why, you were best get one of the varlets of the city, a serjeant; I'll appoint you one, if you please.

Mat. Will you, sir? Why we can wish no better.

Bob. We'll leave it to you, sir.

[*Exeunt* BOB. *and* MAT.

Brain. This is rare! Now will I go pawn this cloak of the justice's man's, at the broker's, for a varlet's suit, and be the varlet myself, and so get money on all sides. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Street before* COB'S *House.*

Enter KNO'WELL.

Kno. O here it is; I have found it now—Hoa, who is within here? [TIB *appears at the window.*

Tib. I am within, sir, what is your pleasure?

Kno. To know who is within besides yourself.

Tib. Why, sir, you are no constable, I hope?

Kno. O, fear you the constable? Then I doubt not you have some guests within deserve that fear—I'll fetch him straight.

Tib. For Heaven's sake, sir——

Kno. Go to, come tell me, is not young Kno'well here?

Tib. Young Kno'well! I know none such, sir, on my honesty.

Kno. Your honesty, dame! It flies too lightly from you. There is no way but fetch the constable.

Tib. The constable! the man is mad, I think.

Enter CASH *and Dame* KITELY.

Cash. Hoa! who keeps house here?

Kno. O, this is the female copesmate of my son. Now shall I meet him straight. [*Aside.*

Dame. Knock, Thomas, hard.

Cash. Hoa! good wife.

Tib. Why, what is the matter with you?

Dame. Why, woman, grieves it you to ope the door! Belike you get something to keep it shut.

Tib. What mean these questions, pray you?

Dame. So strange you make it! Is not my husband here?

Kno. Her husband! [*Aside.*

Dame. My tried and faithful husband, Master Kitely.

Tib. I hope he needs not be tried here.

Dame. Come hither, Cash—I see my turtle coming to his haunts; let us retire. [*They retire.*

Kno. This must be some device to mock me withal.
Soft—who is this?—Oh! 'tis my son disguised.
I'll watch him and surprise him.

Enter KITELY, *muffled in a cloak.*

Kite. 'Tis truth, I see; there she skulks.
But I will fetch her from her hold—I will—
I tremble so, I scarce have power to do the justice
Her infamy demands.
[*As* KITELY *goes forward, Dame* KITELY *and* KNO'WELL *lay hold of him.*

Kno. Have I trapped you, youth? You cannot 'scape me now.

Dame. O, sir! have I forestalled your honest market!
Found your close walks! You stand amazed
Now, do you? Ah, hide, hide your face, for shame!
I'faith, I am glad I have found you out at last.
What is your jewel, trow? In, come let's see her; fetch
Forth the wanton dame—If she be fairer,
In any honest judgment, than myself,
I'll be content with it: but she is change;
She feeds you fat, she soothes your appetite,
And you are well. Your wife, an honest woman,
Is meat twice sod to you, sir. O, you treacher!

Kno. What mean you, woman? Let go your hold.
I see the counterfeit—I am his father, and claim him as my own.

Kite. [*Discovering himself.*] I am your cuckold, and claim my vengeance.

Dame. What, do you wrong me, and insult me too?
Thou faithless man!

Kite. Out on thy more than strumpet's impudence!
Steal'st thou thus to thy haunts? And have I taken
Thy bawd and thee, and thy companion,
This hoary-headed letcher, this old goat,
Close at your villany, and would'st thou 'scuse it
With this stale harlot's jest, accusing me?
O, old incontinent, dost thou not shame
To have a mind so hot; and to entice,
And feed the enticement of a lustful woman?

Dame. Out, I defy thee, thou dissembling wretch!

Kite. Defy me, strumpet! Ask thy pander here;
Can he deny it, or that wicked elder?

Kno. Why, hear you, sir—

Cash. Master, 'tis in vain to reason, while these passions blind you—I'm grieved to see you thus.

Kite. Tut, tut, never speak; I see through every Veil you cast upon your treachery: but I have
Done with you, and root you from my heart for ever.
For you, sir, thus I demand my honour's due;
Resolved to cool your lust, or end my shame.
[*Draws.*

Kno. What lunacy is this! Put up your sword, and undeceive yourself—No arm, that e'er poised weapon, can affright me. But I pity folly, nor cope with madness.

Kite. I will have proofs—I will—so you, good wife-bawd, Cob's wife; and you, that make your husband such a monster; and you, young pander, and old cuckold-maker, I'll have you every one before the justice—Nay, you shall answer it; I charge you go. Come forth, thou bawd.
[*Goes into the house, and brings out* TIB.

Kno. Marry, with all my heart, sir; I go willingly.
Though I do taste this as a trick upon me,
To punish my impertinent search; and justly;
And half forgive my son for the device.

Kite. Come, will you go?

Dame. Go! to thy shame, believe it.

Kite. Though shame and sorrow both my heart betide,
Come on—I must, and will be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Stocks-Market.*

Enter BRAIN-WORM.

Brain. Well, of all my disguises yet, now am I most like myself; being in this serjeant's gown. A man of my present profession never counterfeits, till he lays hold upon a debtor, and says, he arrests him; for then he brings him to all manner of unrest. A kind of little kings we are, bearing the diminutive of a mace, made like a young artichoke, that always carries pepper and salt in itself. Well, I know not what danger I undergo by this exploit; pray Heaven I come well off!

Enter BOBADIL *and Master* MATTHEW.

Mat. See, I think, yonder is the varlet, by his gown. Save you, friend; are not you here by appointment of justice Clement's man?

Brain. Yes, an't please you, sir, he told me two gentlemen had willed him to procure a warrant from his master, which I have about me, to be served on one Downright.

Mat. It is honestly done of you both; and see where the party comes you must arrest. Serve it upon him quickly, before he be aware——

Enter Master STEPHEN, *in* DOWNRIGHT'S *cloak.*

Bob. Bear back, master Matthew.

Brain. Master Downright, I arrest you i' the queen's name, and must carry you before a justice, by virtue of this warrant.

Step. Me, friend, I am no Downright, I. I am Master Stephen; you do not well to arrest me, I tell you truly. I am in nobody's bonds or books, I would you should know it. A plague on you

heartily, for making me thus afraid before my time.

Brain. Why now are you deceived, gentlemen?

Bob. He wears such a cloak, and that deceived us. But see, here he comes, indeed! this is he, officer.

Enter DOWNRIGHT.

Down. Why, how now, Signor Gull! are you turned filcher of late? Come, deliver up my cloak.

Step. Your cloak, sir! I bought it even now in open market.

Brain. Master Downright, I have a warrant I must serve upon you, procured by these two gentlemen.

Down. These gentlemen! these rascals!

Brain. Keep the peace, I charge you, in her majesty's name.

Down. I obey thee. What must I do, officer?

Brain. Go before Mr Justice Clement, to answer what they can object against you, sir. I will use you kindly, sir.

Mat. Come, let us before, and make the justice, captain—— [*Exit.*

Bob. The varlet is a tall man, before heaven! [*Exit.*

Down. Gull, you'll gi' me my cloak?

Step. Sir, I bought it, and I'll keep it.

Down. You will?

Step. Aye, that I will.

Down. Officer, there is thy fee, arrest him.

Brain. Master Stephen, I must arrest you.

Step. Arrest me! I scorn it; there, take your cloak, I'll none o'nt.

Down. Nay, that shall not serve your turn, now, sir. Officer, I'll go with thee to the justice's. Bring him along.

Step. Why, is not here your cloak? what would you have?

Down. I'll ha' you answer it, sir.

Brain. Sir, I'll take your word, and this gentleman's too, for his appearance.

Down. I'll ha' no words taken. Bring him along.

Brain. So, so, I have made a fair mash on't.

Step. Must I go?

Brain. I know no remedy, master Stephen.

Down. Come along before me here. I do not love your hanging look behind.

Step. Why, sir, I hope you cannot hang me for it. Can he, fellow?

Brain. I think not, sir. It is but a whipping matter, sure!

Step. Why, then, let him do his worst, I am resolute. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in Justice* CLEMENT'S *House.*

Enter CLEMENT, KNO'WELL, KITELY, *Dame* KITELY, TIB, CASH, COB, *and Servants.*

Clem. Nay, but stay, stay, give me leave. My chair, sirrah. You, master Kno'well, say you went thither to meet your son.

Kno. Aye, sir.

Clem. But who directed you thither?

Kno. That did mine own man, sir.

Clem. Where is he?

Kno. Nay, I know not now; I left him with your clerk; and appointed him to stay for me.

Clem. My clerk! About what time was this?

Kno. Marry, between one and two, as I take it.

Clem. And what time came my man with the false message to you, master Kitely?

Kite. After two, sir.

Clem. Very good: but, Mrs Kitely, how chance it that you were at Cob's? Ha!

Dame. An' please you, sir, I'll tell you. My brother Well-bred told me, that Cob's house was a suspected place—

Clem. So it appears, methinks: but on.

Dame. And that my husband used thither daily.

Clem. No matter, so he used himself well, mistress.

Dame. True, sir; but you know what grows by such haunts, oftentimes.

Clem. I see rank fruits of a jealous brain, mistress Kitely. But, did you find your husband there, in that case, as you suspected?

Kite. I found her there, sir.

Clem. Did you so? That alters the case.—— Who gave you knowledge of your wife's being there?

Kite. Marry, that did my brother Well-bred.

Clem. How! Well-bred first tell her, then tell you after? Where is Well-bred?

Kite. Gone with my sister, sir, I know not whither.

Clem. Why, this is a mere trick, a device; you are gulled in this most grossly, all! Alas, poor wench, wert thou suspected for this?

Tib. Yes, an' it please you.

Clem. I smell mischief here, plot and contrivance, master Kitely. However, if you will step into the next room with your wife, and think coolly of matters, you'll find some trick has been played you—I fear there have been jealousies on both parts, and the wags have been merry with you.

Kite. I begin to feel it—I'll take your counsel—Will you go in, dame?

Dame. I will have justice, Mr Kitely.

[*Exit* KITELY *and Dame.*

Clem. You will be a woman, Mrs Kitely, that I see—How now, what's the matter?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's a gentleman i' the court without, desires to speak with your worship.

Clem. A gentleman! What is he?

Serv. A soldier, sir, he says.

Clem. A soldier! My sword, quickly. A soldier speak with me! Stand by, I will end your matters, anon—Let the soldier enter. Now, sir, what ha' you to say to me?

Enter BOBADIL *and* MATTHEW.

Bob. By your worship's favour——

Clem. Nay, keep out, sir, I know not your pre-

tence; you send me word, sir, you are a soldier. Why, sir, you shall be answered here; here be them have been among soldiers. Sir, your pleasure?

Bob. Faith, sir, so it is, this gentleman and myself have been most uncivilly wronged and beaten by one Downright, a coarse fellow about the town here; and, for my own part, I protest, being a man in no sort given to this filthy humour of quarrelling, he hath assaulted me in the way of my peace; despoiled me of mine honour; disarmed me of my weapons; and rudely laid me along in the open streets; when I not so much as once offered to resist him.

Clem. O, God's precious! Is this the soldier? Lie there, my sword, 'twill make him swoon, I fear; he is not fit to look on't, that will put up a blow.

Mat. An't please your worship, he was bound to the peace.

Clem. Why, an' he were, sir, his hands were not bound, were they?

Serv. There's one of the varlets of the city, sir, has brought two gentlemen here, one upon your worship's warrant.

Clem. My warrant!

Serv. Yes, sir, the officer says, procured by these two.

Clem. Bid him come in. Set by this picture. What, Mr Downright! are you brought at Mr Freshwater's suit here?

Enter DOWNRIGHT, STEPHEN, *and* BRAINWORM.

Dow. I'faith, sir. And here's another, brought at my suit.

Clem. What are you, sir?

Step. A gentleman, sir. O, uncle!

Clem. Uncle! Who, Master Kno'well?

Kno. Ay, sir, this is a wise kinsman of mine.

Step. God's my witness, uncle, I am wronged here monstrously; he charges me with stealing of his cloak, and would I might never stir, if I did not find it in the street by chance.

Dow. O, did you find it, now? You said you bought it ere-while.

Step. And you said I stole it. Nay, now my uncle is here, I will do well enough with you.

Clem. Well, let us breathe a-while. You that have cause to complain there, stand forth. Had you my warrant for this gentleman's apprehension?

Bob. Aye, an't please your worship.

Clem. Nay, do not speak in passion so. Where had you it?

Bob. Of your clerk, sir.

Clem. That's well, an' my clerk can make warrants, and my hand not at them! Where is the warrant? officer, have you it?

Brain. No, sir, your worship's man, master Formal, bid me do it for these gentlemen, and he would be my discharge.

Clem. Why, Master Downright, are you such a novice to be served, and never see the warrant?

Dow. Sir, he did not serve it on me.

Clem. No, how then?

Dow. Marry, sir, he came to me, and said he must serve it, and he would use me kindly, and so——

Clem. O, God's pity, was it so, sir? He must serve it? Give me a warrant, I must serve one too—you knave, you slave, you rogue, do you say you must, sirrah? Away with him to the gaol! I will teach you a trick for you must, sir.

Brain. Good sir, I beseech you be good to me.

Clem. Tell him, he shall go to the gaol; away with him, I say.

Brain. Aye, sir, if you will commit me, it shall be for committing more than this. I will not lose by my travel any grain of my fame, certain. [*Throws off his disguise.*

Clem. How is this!

Kno. My man, Brain-worm!

Step. O, yes, uncle, Brain-worm has been with my cousin Edward and I, all this day.

Clem. I told you all there was some device.

Brain. Nay, excellent justice, since I have laid myself thus open to you, now stand strong for me, both by your sword and your balance.

Clem. Body o' me, a merry knave! Give me a bowl of sack. If he belongs to you, Master Kno'well, I bespeak your patience.

Brain. That is it I have most need of. Sir, if you will pardon me only, I will glory in all the rest of my exploits.

Kno. Sir, you know I love not to have my favours come hard from me. You have your pardon; though I suspect you shrewdly for being of counsel with my son against me.

Brain. Yes, faith, I have, sir; though you retained me doubly this morning for yourself; first as Brain-worm, after, as Fitz-Sword. I was your reformed soldier. 'Twas I sent you to Cob's upon the errand without end.

Kno. Is it possible? Or that thou should'st disguise thyself so as I should not know thee?

Brain. O, sir! this has been the day of my metamorphoses; it is not that shape alone, that I have run through to-day. I brought Master Kitely a message too, in the form of Master Justice's man here, to draw him out of the way, as well as your worship; while Master Well-bred might make a conveyance of Mrs Bridget to my young master.

Kno. My son is not married, I hope?

Brain. Faith, sir, they are both as sure as love, a priest, and three thousand pounds, which is her portion, can make them; and by this time are ready to bespeak their wedding supper at the Windmill, except some friend here prevents them, and invite them home.

Clem. Marry, that will I; I thank thee for putting me in mind on't. Sirrah, go you and fetch them hither upon my warrant. Neither's friends have cause to be sorry, if I know the young couple aright. But I pray thee, what hast thou done with my man Formal?

Brain. Faith, sir, after some ceremony past,

as making him drunk, first with story, and then with wine, but all in kindness, and stripping him to his shirt; I left him in that cool vein, departed, sold your worship's warrant to these two, pawned his livery for that varlet's gown to serve it in; and thus have brought myself, by my activity, to your worship's consideration.

Clem. And I will consider thee in a cup of sack. Here's to thee; which having drank off, this is my sentence, pledge me. Thou hast done, or assisted to nothing, in my judgment, but deserves to be pardoned for the wit of the offence. Go into the next room; let Master Kitely into this whimsical business, and, if he does not forgive thee, he has less mirth in him than an honest man ought to have. How now, who are these?

Enter EDWARD KNO'WELL, WELL-BRED, *and* BRIDGET.

O, the young company. Welcome, welcome. Give you joy. Nay, Mrs Bridget, blush not! you are not so fresh a bride, but the news of it has come hither before you. Master Bridegroom, I have made your peace, give me your hand. So will I for the rest, ere you forsake my roof.

All. We are the more bound to your humanity, sir.

Clem. Only these two have so little of man in them, they are no part of my care.

Step. And what shall I do?

Clem. Oh! I had lost a sheep, an' he had not bleated. Why, sir, you shall give Mr Downright his cloak; and I will entreat him to take it. A trencher and a napkin you shall have in the buttery, and keep Cob and his wife company there: whom I will entreat first to be reconciled; and you to endeavour with your wit to keep them so.

Step. I will do my best.

Clem. Call Master Kitely, and his wife, there.

Enter KITELY *and* DAME KITELY.

Did I not tell you there was a plot against you? Did I not smell it out, as a wise magistrate ought? Have not you traced, have you not found it, eh, Master Kitely?

Kite. I have—I confess my folly, and own I have deserved what I have suffered for it. The trial has been severe, but it is past. All I have to ask now, is, that, as my folly is cured, and my persecutors forgiven, my shame may be forgotten.

Clem. That will depend upon yourself, Master Kitely; do not you yourself create the food for mischief, and the mischievous will not prey upon you. But come, let a general reconciliation go round, and let all discontents be laid aside. You, Master Downright, put off your anger. You, Master Kno'well, your cares. And do you, Master Kitely, and your wife, put off your jealousies.

Kite. Sir, thus they go from me: kiss me, my wife.

See, what a drove of horns fly in the air,
Winged with my cleansed and my credulous breath;
Watch them, suspicious eyes, watch where they fall!
See, see, on heads, that think they have none at all.
O, what a plenteous world of this will come!
When air rains horns, all may be sure of some.

Clem. 'Tis well, 'tis well. This night we will dedicate to friendship, love, and laughter. Master Bridegroom, take your bride, and lead every one a fellow. Here is my mistress, Brain-worm! to whom all my addresses of courtship shall have their reference: whose adventures this day, when our grandchildren shall hear to be made a fable, I doubt not but it shall find both spectators and applause. [*Exeunt omnes.*

VOLPONE, OR THE FOX.

BY

BEN JONSON.

PROLOGUE.

Now luck yet send us, and a little wit
Will serve to make our play hit;
(According to the palates of the season)
Here is rhime, not empty of reason:
This we were bid to credit, from our poet,
Whose true scope, if you would know it,
In all his poems, still hath been this measure,
To mix profit with your pleasure;
And not as some (whose throats their envy ailing)
Cry hoarsely, all he writes is railing:
And when his plays come forth, think they can flout them,
With saying he was a year about them.
To these there needs no lie, but this his creature,
Which was two months since no feature;
And though he dares give them five lives to mend it,
'Tis known five weeks fully pen'd it:
From his own hand, without a coadjutor,
Novice, journeyman, or tutor.
Yet, thus much I can give you as a token
Of his plays worth, no eggs are broken;
Nor quaking custards with fierce teeth affrighted,
Wherewith your rout are so delighted;
Nor hales he in a gull, old ends reciting,
To stop gaps in his loose writing;
With such a deal of monstrous and forc'd action,
As might make Bet'lem a faction;
Nor made he his play, for jests, stol'n from each table,
But makes jests to fit his fable.
And so presents quick comedy refined,
As best critics have designed;
The laws of time, place, persons he observeth,
From no needful rule he swerveth.
All gall and copperas from his ink he draineth,
Only a little salt remaineth;
Wherewith he'll rub your cheeks, 'till (red with laughter)
They shall look fresh a week after.

THE ARGUMENT.

V olpone, childless, rich, feigns sick, despairs,
O ffers his state to hopes of several heirs,
L ies languishing; his parasite receives
P resents of all, assures, deludes; then weaves
O ther cross-plots, which ope themselves, are told.
N ew tricks for safety are sought; they thrive: when, bold,
E ach tempts the other again, and all are sold.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

VOLPONE, *a Magnifico.*
MOSCA, *his Parasite.*
VOLTORE, *an Advocate.*
CORBACCIO, *an old Gentleman.*
CORVINO, *a Merchant.*
1. *Avocatori,*
2. *Avocatori,*
3. *Avocatori,* } *Four Magistrates.*
4. *Avocatori,*
NOTARIO, *the Register.*
NANO, *a Dwarf.*
CASTRONE, *an Eunuch.*
POLITICK WOULD-BE, *a Knight.*
PEREGRINE, *a Gentleman-traveller.*
BONARIO, *a young Gentleman.*
Madam WOULD-BE, *the Knight's Wife.*
CELIA, *the Merchant's Wife.*
COMMANDADORI, *Officers.*
MERCATORI, *three Merchants.*
ANDROGYNO, *an Hermaphrodite.*
SERVITORE, *a Servant.*
Women.

SCENE,—*Venice.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

VOLPONE *and* MOSCA.

Vol. GOOD morning to the day; and, next, my gold;
Open the shrine, that I may see my saint.
Hail, the world's soul, and mine! More glad than is
The teeming earth to see the long'd-for sun
Peep through the horns of the celestial ram,
And I, to view thy splendour, dark'ning his:
That lying here amongst my other hoards,
Shewst like a flame by night; or like the day
Struck out of chaos, when all darkness fled
Unto the centre. O, thou son of Sol,
(But brighter than thy father) let me kiss
With adoration thee, and every relic
Of sacred treasure in this blessed room.
Well did wise poets by thy glorious name
Title that age, which they would have the best,
Thou being the best of things, and far transcending
All stile of joy in children, parents, friends,
Or any other waking dream on earth.
Thy looks when they to Venus did ascribe,
They should have given her twenty thousand Cupids;
Such are thy beauties, and our loves! dear saint,
Riches, the dumb god, that giv'st all men tongues:
That canst do naught, and yet mak'st men do all things;
The price of souls; even hell, with thee to boot,
Is made worth Heav'n! Thou art virtue, fame,
Honour, and all things else! Who can get thee,
He shall be noble, valiant, honest, wise——
Mos. And what he will, sir. Riches are in fortune
A greater good, than wisdom is in nature.
Volp. True, my beloved Mosca. Yet, I glory
More in the cunning purchase of my wealth,
Than in the glad possession, since I gain
No common way: I use no trade, no venture;
I wound no earth with plow-shares, I fat no beasts
To feed the shambles; have no mills for iron,
Oil, corn, or men, to grind 'em into powder;
I blow no subtle glass, expose no ships
To threatnings of the furrow-faced sea;
I turn no monies in the public bank,
Nor usure private.
Mos. No, sir, nor devour
Soft prodigals. You shall ha' some will swallow
A melting heir, as glibly as your Dutch
Will pills of butter, and ne'er purge for't;
Tear forth the fathers of poor families
Out of their beds, and coffin them alive,
In some kind clasping prison, where their bones
May be forthcoming, when the flesh is rotten:
But your sweet nature doth abhor these courses;
You loath the widow's or the orphan's tears
Should wash your pavements; or their piteous cries
Ring in your roofs, and beat the air for vengeance.
Volp. Right, Mosca, I do loath it.
Mos. And besides, sir,

You are not like a thresher that doth stand
With a huge flail, watching a heap of corn,
And, hungry, dares not taste the smallest grain,
But feeds on mallows, and such bitter herbs;
Nor like the merchant, who hath fill'd his vaults
With Romagnia, and rich Candian wines,
Yet drinks the lees of Lombard's vinegar:
You will not lie in straw, whilst moths and worms
Feed on your sumptuous hangings and soft beds.
You know the use of riches, and dare give now
From that bright heap, to me, your poor observer,
Or to your dwarf, or your hermaphrodite,
Your eunuch, or what other household-trifle
Your pleasure allows maint'nance.——
Vol. Hold thee, Mosca,
Take, of my hand; thou strik'st on truth, in all:
And they are envious, term thee parasite.
Call forth my dwarf, my eunuch, and my fool,
And let 'em make me sport. What should I do,
But cocker up my genius, and live free
To all delights, my fortune calls me to?
I have no wife, no parent, child, ally,
To give my substance to; but whom I make,
Must be my heir: And this makes men observe me.
This draws new clients daily to my house,
Women and men of ev'ry sex and age,
That bring me presents, send me plate, coin, jewels,
With hope, that when I die, (which they expect
Each greedy minute) it shall then return
Tenfold upon them; whilst some, covetous
Above the rest, seek to engross me whole,
And counter-work the one unto the other,
Contend in gifts, as they would seem in love:
All which I suffer, playing with their hopes,
And am content to coin them into profit,
And look upon their kindness, and take more,
And look on that; still bearing them in hand,
Letting the cherry knock against their lips,
And draw it by their mouths, and back again.
How now!

SCENE II.

NANO, ANDROGYNO, CASTRONE, VOLPONE, *and* MOSCA.

Nan. Now room for fresh gamesters, who do will you to know,
They do bring you neither play, nor university show;
And therefore do intreat you, that whatsoever they rehearse,
May not fare a whit the worse, for the false pace of the verse.
If you wonder at this, you will wonder at more, e'er we pass,
For know, here is inclosed the soul of Pythagoras,
That juggler divine, as hereafter shall follow;
Which soul (fast and loose, sir) came first from Apollo,
And was breath'd into Æthalides, Mercurius his son,
Where it had the gift to remember all that ever was done.
From thence it fled forth, and made quick transmigration
To godly-lockt Euphorbus, who was kill'd in good fashion,
At the siege of old Troy, by the cuckold of Sparta.
Hermotimus was next (I find it in my charta)
To whom it did pass, where no sooner it was missing,
But with one Pyrrhus of Delos it learn'd to go a-fishing:
And thence did it enter the sophist of Greece.
From Pythagore she went into a beautiful piece,
Hight Aspasia, the Meretrix; and the next toss of her
Was, again of a whore she became a philosopher,
Crates the Cynic: (as itself doth relate it)
Since kings, knights, and beggars, knaves, lords and fools gat it,
Besides ox and ass, camel, mule, goat and brock,
In all which it hath spoke, as in the cobler's cock.
But I come not here to discourse of that matter,
Or his one, two or three, or his great oath, by quater,
His musics, his trigon, his golden thigh,
Or his telling how elements shift; but I
Would ask, how of late, thou hast suffer'd translation,
And shifted thy coat in these days of reformation?
And. Like one of the reformed, a fool, as you see,
Counting all old doctrine heresie.
Nan. But not on thine own forbid meats hast thou ventured?
And. On fish, when first a Carthusian I enter'd.
Nan. Why, then thy dogmatical silence hath left thee?
And. Of that an obstreperous lawyer bereft me.
Nan. O wonderful change! when sir lawyer forsook thee,
For Pythagore's sake, what body then took thee?
And. A good dull moyle.
Nan. And how! by that means,
Thou wert brought to allow of the eating of beans?
And. Yes.
Nan. But, from the moyle, into whom did'st thou pass?
And. Into a very strange beast, by some writers call'd an ass;
By others, a precise, pure, illuminate brother,
Of those devour flesh, and sometimes one another:
And will drop you forth a libel, or a sanctified lie,
Betwixt every spoonful of a nativity-pie.
Nan. Now quit thee, for heav'n, of that profane nation;
And gently report thy next transmigration.
And. To the same that I am.
Nan. A creature of delight?
And (what is more than a fool) an hermaphrodite?
Now pri'thee, sweet soul, in all thy variation,
Which body would'st thou choose, to keep up thy station?
And. Troth, this I am in, even here would I tarry.

Nan. 'Cause here the delight of each sex thou can'st vary?
And. Alas! those pleasures be stale, and forsaken;
No, 'tis your fool wherewith I am so taken,
The only one creature that I can call blessed:
For all other forms I have proved most distressed.
Nan. Spoke true, as thou wert in Pythagoras still.
This learned opinion we celebrate will,
Fellow eunuch (as behoves us) with all our wit and art,
To dignify that, whereof ourselves are so great and special a part.
Vol. Now, very, very pretty: Mosca, this
Was thy invention?
Mos. If it please my patron, not else.
Vol. It doth, good Mosca.
Mos. Then it was, sir.

SONG.

Fools, they are the only nation
Worth men's envy, or admiration;
Free from care, or sorrow-taking,
Selves and others merry-making:
All they speak, or do, is sterling.
Your fool he is your great man's darling,
And your lady's sport and pleasure;
Tongue and bauble are his treasure.
Ev'n his face begetteth laughter,
And he speaks truth free from slaughter;
He's the grace of ev'ry feast,
And sometimes the chiefest guest:
Hath his trencher, and his stool,
When wit waits upon the fool.
O, who would not be
He, he, he?

Volp. Who's that? Away, look, Mosca.
[*One knocks without.*
Mos. Fool, begone.
'Tis signior Voltore, the advocate,
I know him by his knock.
Volp. Fetch me my gown,
My furs and night-caps; say, my couch's changing:
And let him entertain himself awhile,
Without, i' the gallery. Now, now, my clients
Begin their visitation! Vulture, kite,
Raven, gor-crow, all my birds of prey,
That think me turning carcase, now they come:
I am not for 'em yet. How now? the news?
Mos. A piece of plate, sir.
Volp. Of what bigness?
Mos. Huge,
Massy and antique, with your name inscribed,
And arms engraven.
Volp. Good! and not a fox
Stretched on the earth, with fine delusive sleights,
Mocking a gaping crow? ha, Mosca?
Mos. Sharp, sir.
Volp. Give me my furs. Why dost thou laugh so, man?
Mos. I cannot chuse, sir, when I apprehend
What thoughts he has (without) now, as he walks,
That this might be the last gift he should give;
That this would fetch you; if you died to-day,
And gave him all, what he should be to-morrow:
What large return would come of all his ventures;
How he should worshipped be, and reverenced;
Ride, with his furs and foot-cloaths; waited on
By herds of fools and clients; have clear way
Made for his moyle, as lettered as himself;
Be called the great and learned advocate:
And then concludes, there's naught impossible.
Volp. Yes, to be learned, Mosca.
Mos. O, no: rich
Implies it. Hood an ass with reverend purple,
So you can hide his two ambitious ears,
And he shall pass for a cathedral doctor.
Volp. My caps, my caps, good Mosca: fetch him in.
Mos. Stay, sir, your ointment for your eyes.
Volp. That's true;
Dispatch, dispatch: I long to have possession
Of my new present.
Mos. That, and thousands more,
I hope to see you lord of.
Volp. Thanks, kind Mosca.
Mos. And that, when I am lost in blended dust,
An hundred such as I am, in succession——
Volp. Nay, that were too much, Mosca.
Mos. You shall live,
Still, to delude these harpies.
Volp. Loving Mosca,
'Tis well; my pillow, now, and let him enter.
Now, my feigned cough, my phthisic, and my gout.
My apoplexy, palsy, and catarrhs,
Help, with your forced functions, this my posture,
Wherein, these three years, I have milked their hopes.
He comes, I hear him, uh, uh, uh, uh, O.

SCENE III.

MOSCA, VOLTORE, *and* VOLPONE.

Mos. You still are, what you were, sir. Only you
(Of all the rest) are he, commands his love:
And you do wisely, to preserve it, thus,
With early visitation, and kind notes
Of your good meaning to him, which I know
Cannot but come most grateful. Patron, sir,
Here's signior Voltore is come——
Volp. What say you?
Mos. Sir, signior Voltore is come this morning,
To visit you.
Volp. I thank him.
Mos. And hath brought
A piece of antique plate, bought of St Mark,
With which he here presents you.
Volp. He is welcome.
Pray him to come more often.
Mos. Yes.
Volt. What says he?
Mos. He thanks you, and desires you to see him often.
Volp. Mosca.
Mos. My patron?

Volp. Bring him near; where is he?
I long to feel his hand.
Mos. The plate is here, sir.
Volt. How fare you, sir?
Volp. I thank you, signior Voltore.
Where is the plate? mine eyes are bad.
Volt. I'm sorry
To see you still thus weak.
Mos. That he is not weaker.
Volp. You are too munificent.
Volt. No, sir, would to Heaven,
I could as well give health to you, as that plate.
Volp. You give, sir, what you can. I thank you. Your love
Hath taste in this, and shall not be unanswered.
I pray you see me often.
Volt. Yes, I shall, sir.
Volp. Be not far from me.
Mos. Do you observe that, sir?
Volp. Hearken unto me still: it will concern you.
Mos. You are a happy man, sir, know your good.
Volp. I cannot now last long——
Mos. You are his heir, sir.
Volt. Am I?
Volp. I feel me going, uh, uh, uh, uh.
I am sailing to my port, uh, uh, uh, uh,
And I am glad I am so near my haven.
Mos. Alas, kind gentleman; well, we must all go——
Volt. But Mosca——
Mos. Age will conquer.
Volt. Pr'ythee hear me.
Am I inscribed his heir for certain?
Mos. Are you?
I do beseech you, sir, you will vouchsafe
To write me i' your family. All my hopes
Depend upon your worship. I am lost,
Except the rising sun do shine on me.
Volt. It shall both shine and warm thee, Mosca.
Mos. Sir,
I am a man that have not done your love
All the worst offices: Here I wear your keys,
See all your coffers and your caskets locked,
Keep the poor inventory of your jewels,
Your plate, and monies; I am your steward, sir,
Husband your goods are here.
Volt. But am I sole heir?
Mos. Without a partner, sir, confirmed this morning;
The wax is warm yet, and the ink scarce dry
Upon the parchment.
Volt. Happy, happy me!
By what good chance, sweet Mosca?
Mos. Your desert, sir;
I know no second cause.
Volt. Thy modesty
Is loth to know it; well, we shall requite it.
Mos. He ever liked your course, sir; that first took him.
I oft have heard him say, how he admired
Men of your large profession, that could speak
To every cause, and things mere contraries,
'Till they were hoarse again, yet all be law;
That, with most quick agility, could turn,
And return; make knots, and undo them;
Give forked counsel; take provoking gold
On either hand, and put it up: These men,
He knew, would thrive with their humility.
And, for his part, he thought he should be blessed,
To have his heir of such a suffering spirit,
So wise, so grave, of so perplexed a tongue,
And loud withal, that could not wag, nor scarce
Lie still, without a fee; when every word
Your worship but lets fall, is a cecchine!
Who's that? one knocks; I would not have you seen, sir. [*Another knocks.*
And yet—pretend you came, and went in haste;
I'll fashion an excuse. And, gentle sir,
When you do come to swim in golden lard,
Up to the arms in honey, that your chin
Is borne up stiff with fatness of the flood,
Think on your vassal; but remember me:
I ha' not been your worst of clients.
Volt. Mosca——
Mos. When will you have your inventory brought, sir?
Or see a copy of the will? anon,
I'll bring 'em to you, sir. Away, be gone,
Put business i' your face. [*Exit* VOLT.
Volp. Excellent Mosca!
Come hither, let me kiss thee.
Mos. Keep you still, sir,
Here is Corbaccio.
Volp. Set the plate away,
The vulture's gone, and the old raven's come.

SCENE IV.

MOSCA, CORBACCIO, *and* VOLPONE.

Mos. Betake you to your silence, and your sleep:
Stand there, and multiply. Now shall we see
A wretch, who is, indeed, more impotent
Than this can feign to be; yet hopes to hop
Over his grave. Signior Corbaccio!
You're very welcome, sir.
Corb. How does your patron?
Mos. Troth, as he did, sir; no amends.
Corb. What? mends he?
Mos. No, sir; he is rather worse.
Corb. That's well. Where is he?
Mos. Upon his couch, sir, newly fallen asleep.
Corb. Does he sleep well?
Mos. No wink, sir, all this night,
Nor yesterday; but slumbers.
Corb. Good! He should take
Some counsel of physicians: I have brought him
An opiate here from mine own doctor——
Mos. He will not hear of drugs.
Corb. Why? I myself
Stood by, while 'twas made; saw all the ingredients,
And know it cannot but most gently work.
My life for his, 'tis but to make him sleep.
Volp. Ay, his last sleep, if he would take it.
Mos. Sir, he has no faith in physic.
Corb. Say you? say you?
Mos. He has no faith in physic: he does think
Most of your doctors are the greater danger,

And worse disease, t'escape. I often have
Heard him protest, that your physician
Should never be his heir.
Corb. Not I his heir?
Mos. Not your physician, sir.
Corb. O no, no, no.
I do not mean it.
Mos. No, sir, nor their fees
He cannot brook: he says, they flay a man
Before they kill him.
Corb. Right, I do conceive you.
Mos. And then they do it by experiment;
For which the law not only doth absolve 'em,
But gives them great reward; and he is loth
To hire his death so.
Corb. It is true, they kill,
With as much licence as a judge.
Mos. Nay, more;
For he but kills, sir, where the law condemns,
And these can kill him too.
Corb. Ay, or me;
Or any man. How does his apoplexy?
Is that strong on him still?
Mos. Most violent,
His speech is broken, and his eyes are set,
His face drawn longer than 'twas wont——
Corb. How? how?
Stronger than he was wont?
Mos. No, sir; his face
Drawn longer than 'twas wont.
Corb. O, good!
Mos. His mouth
Is ever gaping, and his eye-lids hang.
Corb. Good.
Mos. A freezing numbness stiffens all his joints,
And makes the colour of his flesh like lead.
Corb. 'Tis good.
Mos. His pulse beats slow and dull.
Corb. Good symptoms still.
Mos. And from his brain——
Corb. Ha! how? not from his brain?
Mos. Yes, sir, and from his brain——
Corb. I conceive you, good.
Mos. Flows a cold sweat, with a continual rheum
Forth the resolved corners of his eyes.
Corb. Is't possible? yet I am better, ha!
How does he, with the swimming of his head?
Mos. O, sir, 'tis past the Scotomy; he now
Hath lost his feeling, and hath left to snort:
You hardly can perceive him that he breathes.
Corb. Excellent, excellent, sure I shall out-last him:
This makes me young again a score of years.
Mos. I was coming for you, sir.
Corb. Has he made his will?
What has he given me?
Mos. No, sir.
Corb. Nothing? ha?
Mos. He has not made his will, sir.
Corb. Oh, oh, oh.
What, then, did Voltore, the lawyer, here?
Mos. He smelt a carcase, sir, when he but heard
My master was about his testament;
As I did urge him to it, for your good——
Corb. He came unto him, did he? I thought so.
Mos. Yes, and presented him this piece of plate.
Corb. To be his heir?
Mos. I do not know, sir.
Corb. True, I know it too.
Mos. By your own scale, sir.
Corb. Well; I shall prevent him, yet. See, Mosca, look,
Here, I have brought a bag of bright cecchines,
Will quite weigh down his plate.
Mos. Yea, marry, sir.
This is true physic, this your sacred medicine;
No talk of opiates, to this great elixir.
Corb. 'Tis *aurum palpabile*, if not *potabile*.
Mos. It shall be ministered to him in his bowl?
Corb. Ay, do, do, do.
Mos. Most blessed cordial. This will recover him.
Corb. Yes, do, do, do.
Mos. I think it were not best, sir.
Corb. What?
Mos. To recover him.
Corb. O, no, no, no; by no means.
Mos. Why, sir, this
Will work some strange effect, if he but feel it.
Corb. 'Tis true, therefore forbear, I'll take my venture;
Give me't again.
Mos. At no hand; pardon me;
You shall not do yourself that wrong, sir. I
Will so advise you, you shall have it all.
Corb. How?
Mos. All, sir, 'tis your right, your own; no man
Can claim a part: 'Tis yours, without a rival,
Decreed by destiny.
Corb. How? how, good Mosca?
Mos. I'll tell you, sir. This fit he shall recover——
Corb. I do conceive you.
Mos. And, on first advantage
Of his gained sense, will I re-importune him
Unto the making of his testament;
And shew him this.
Corb. Good, good.
Mos. 'Tis better, yet,
If you will hear, sir.
Corb. Yes, with all my heart.
Mos. Now, would I counsel you, make home with speed;
There frame a will; whereto you shall inscribe
My master your sole heir.
Corb. And disinherit my son?
Mos. O, sir, the better: for that colour
Shall make it much more taking.
Corb. O, but colour?
Mos. This will, sir, you shall send it unto me.
Now, when I come to inforce (as I will do)
Your cares, your watchings, and your many prayers,
Your more than many gifts, your this day's present,
And last, produce your will; where (without thought,
Or least regard, unto your proper issue,
A son so brave, and highly meriting)

The stream of your diverted love hath thrown you
Upon my master, and made him your heir:
He cannot be so stupid, or stone-dead,
But out of conscience, and mere gratitude—
Corb. He must pronounce me his.
Mos. 'Tis true.
Corb. This plot did I think on before.
Mos. I do believe it.
Corb. Do you not believe it?
Mos. Yes, sir.
Corb. Mine own project.
Mos. Which when he hath done, sir—
Corb. Published me his heir?
Mos. And you so certain to survive him—
Corb. Ay.
Mos. Being so lusty a man—
Corb. 'Tis true.
Mos. Yes, sir—
Corb. I thought on that too. See, how he should be
The very organ, to express my thoughts!
Mos. You have not only done yourself a good—
Corb. But multiplied it on my son?
Mos. 'Tis right, sir.
Corb. Still, my invention.
Mos. 'Las, sir, Heaven knows,
It hath been all my study, all my care,
(I e'en grow grey withal) how to work things—
Corb. I do conceive, sweet Mosca.
Mos. You are he, for whom I labour here.
Corb. Ay, do, do, do: I'll straight about it.
Mos. Rook go with you, raven.
Corb. I know thee honest.
Mos. You do lie, sir——
Corb. And——
Mos. Your knowledge is no better than your cares, sir.
Corb. I do not doubt, to be a father to thee.
Mos. Nor I, to gull my brother of his blessing.
Corb. I may ha' my youth restored to me, why not?
Mos. Your worship is a precious ass——
Corb. What say'st thou?
Mos. I do desire your worship to make haste, sir.
Corb. 'Tis done, 'tis done, I go. [*Exit.*
Volp. O, I shall burst;
Let out my sides, let out my sides—
Mos. Contain
Your flux of laughter, sir: you know, this hope
Is such a bait, it covers my hook.
Volp. O, but thy working, and thy placing it!
I cannot hold; good rascal, let me kiss thee:
I never knew thee in so rare a humour.
Mos. Alas! sir, I but do as I am taught;
Follow your grave instructions; give 'em words;
Pour oil into their ears; and send them hence.
Volp. 'Tis true, 'tis true. What a rare punishment
Is avarice, to itself?
Mos. Ay, with our help, sir.
Volp. So many cares, so many maladies,
So many fears attending on old age,
Yea, death so often call'd on, as no wish
Can be more frequent with 'em, their limbs faint,
Their senses dull, their seeing, hearing, going,
All dead before them; yea, their very teeth,
Their instruments of eating, failing them:
Yet this is reckon'd life! Nay, here was one,
Is now gone home, that wishes to live longer!
Feels not his gout, nor palsy, feigns himself
Younger by scores of years, flatters his age,
With confident belying it, hopes he may
With charms, like Æson, have his youth restored:
And with these thoughts so battens, as if fate
Would be as easily cheated on, as he,
And all turns air! Who's that there, now? a third? [*Another knocks.*
Mos. Close, to your couch again: I hear his voice.
It is Corvino, our spruce merchant.
Volp. Dead.
Mos. Another bout, sir, with your eyes. Who's there?

SCENE V.

MOSCO, CORVINO, *and* VOLPONE.

Mos. Signior Corvino! come most wish'd for! O,
How happy were you, if you knew it, now!
Corv. Why? what? wherein?
Mos. The tardy hour is come, sir.
Corv. He is not dead?
Mos. Not dead, sir, but as good;
He knows no man.
Corv. How shall I do then?
Mos. Why, sir?
Corv. I have brought him here a pearl.
Mos. Perhaps he has
So much remembrance left as to know you, sir;
He still calls on you; nothing but your name
Is in his mouth: is your pearl orient, sir?
Corv. Venice was never owner of the like.
Volp. Signior Corvino.
Mos. Hark.
Volp. Signior Corvino.
Mos. He calls you, step and give it him. He's here, sir,
And he has brought you a rich pearl.
Corv. How do you, sir?
Tell him it doubles the twelfth caract.
Mos. Sir,
He cannot understand, his hearing's gone;
And yet it comforts him to see you——
Corv. Say
I have a diamond for him too.
Mos. Best shew't, sir,
Put it into his hand; 'tis only there
He apprehends: he has his feeling yet;
See, how he grasps it!
Corv. 'Las, good gentleman!
How pitiful the sight is!
Mos. Tut, forget, sir.
The weeping of an heir should still be laughter,
Under a visor.
Corv. Why? am I his heir?
Mos. Sir, I am sworn, I may not shew the will,
Till he be dead: but, here has been Corbaccio,
Here has been Voltore, here were others too,

I cannot number 'em, they were so many,
All gaping here for legacies; but I,
Taking the advantage of his naming you,
(Signior Corvino, Signior Corvino) took
Paper, and pen, and ink, and there I ask'd him,
Whom he would have his heir? Corvino. Who
Should be executor? Corvino. And,
To any question he was silent to,
I still interpreted the nods he made,
(Through weakness) for consent: and sent home th'others,
Nothing bequeath'd them, but to cry and curse.
Corv. O, my dear Mosca. Does he not perceive us? [*They embrace.*
Mos. No more than a blind harper. He knows no man.
No face of friend, nor name of any servant,
Who 'twas that fed him last, or gave him drink:
Not those he hath begotten, or brought up,
Can he remember.
Corv. Has he children?
Mos. Bastards,
Some dozen, or more, that he begot on beggars,
Gipsies, and Jews, and Blackamoors, when he was drunk.
Knew you not that, sir? 'Tis the common fable.
The dwarf, the fool, the eunuch are all his;
He's the true father of his family,
In all, save me: but he has giv'n 'em nothing.
Corv. That's well, that's well. Art sure he does not hear us?
Mos. Sure, sir? Why, look you, credit your own sense.—
The pox approach, and add to your diseases,
If it would send you hence the sooner, sir.
For your incontinence it hath deserv'd it
Throughly and throughly, and the plague to boot.
You may come near, sir,) would you would once close
Those filthy eyes of your's, that flow with slime,
Like two frog-pits; and those same hanging cheeks,
Cover'd with hide, instead of skin: (Nay, help, sir,)
That look like frozen dish-clouts, set on end.
Corv. Or, like an old smok'd wall, on which the rain
Ran down in streaks.
Mos. Excellent, sir, speak out;
You may be louder yet: A culvering,
Discharged in his ear, would hardly bore it.
Corv. His nose is like a common-shore, still running.
Mos. 'Tis good! and, what his mouth?
Corv. A very draught.
Mos. O, stop it up—
Corv. By no means.
Mos. Pray you let me.
Faith, I could stifle him, rarely, with a pillow,
As well as any woman that should keep him.
Corv. Do as you will, but I'll begone.
Mos. Be so;
It is your presence makes him last so long.
Corv. I pray you, use no violence.
Mos. No, sir, why
Why should you be thus scrupulous? Pray you, sir.
Corv. Nay, at your discretion.
Mos. Well, good sir, be gone.
Corv. I will not trouble him now, to take my pearl?
Mos. Puh, nor your diamond. What a needless care
Is this afflicts you? Is not all here yours?
Am not I here? whom you have made your creature?
That owe my being to you?
Corv. Grateful Mosca!
Thou art my friend, my fellow, my companion,
My partner, and shalt share in all my fortunes.
Mos. Excepting one.
Corv. What's that?
Mos. Your gallant wife, sir. [*Exit* CORV.
Now, is he gone: We had no other means
To shoot him hence, but this.
Volp. My divine Mosca!
Thou hast to-day outgone thyself. Who's there? [*Another knocks.*
I will be troubled with no more. Prepare
Me music, dances, banquets, all delights;
The Turk is not more sensual in his pleasures,
Than will Volpone. Let me see, a pearl?
A diamond? plate? cecchines? Good morning's purchase;
Why, this is better than rob churches yet;
Or fat, by eating (once a month) a man.
Who is't?
Mos. The beauteous lady Would-be, sir,
Wife to the English knight, Sir Politic Would-be,
(This is the stile, sir, is directed me)
Hath sent to you, how you have slept to-night,
And if you would be visited.
Volp. Not now.
Some three hours hence—
Mos. I told the squire so much.
Volp. When I am high with mirth and wine: Then, then.
'Fore Heav'n, I wonder at the desperate valour
Of the bold English, that they dare let loose
Their wives to all encounters!
Mos. Sir, this knight
Had not his name for nothing, he is politic,
And knows, howe'er his wife affects strange airs,
She hath not yet the face to be dishonest.
But had she Signior Corvino's wife's face——
Volp. Has she so rare a face?
Mos. O, sir, the wonder,
The blazing star of Italy! a wench
O' the first year! a beauty ripe as harvest!
Whose skin is whiter than a swan all over!
Than silver, snow, or lilies! a soft lip,
Would tempt you to eternity of kissing!
And flesh that melteth, in the touch, to blood
Bright as your gold! and lovely as your gold!
Volp. Why, had I not known this before?
Mos. Alas, sir,
Myself but yesterday discovered it.
Volp. How might I see her?
Mos. O, not possible;
She's kept as warily as is your gold:

Never does come abroad, never takes air,
But at a window. All her looks are sweet,
As the first grapes or cherries; and are watch'd
As near as they are.
Volp. I must see her——
Mos. Sir,
There is a guard of ten spies thick upon her;
All his whole household: Each of which is set
Upon his fellow, and have all their charge,
When he goes out, when he comes in, examin'd.
Volp. I will go see her, though but at her window.
Mos. In some disguise then.
Volp. That is true. I must
Maintain mine own shape, still the same: We'll think. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

POLITIC WOULD-BE *and* PEREGRINE.

Pol. Sir, to a wise man, all the world's his soil.
It is not Italy, nor France, nor Europe,
That must bound me, if my fates call me forth.
Yet, I protest, it is no salt desire
Of seeing countries, shifting a religion,
Nor any disaffection to the state
Where I was bred, (and unto which I owe
My dearest plots) hath brought me out; much less,
That idle, antic, stale, gray-headed project
Of knowing men's minds and manners, with Ulysses:
But, a peculiar humour of my wife's,
Laid for this heighth of Venice, to observe,
To quote, to learn the language, and so forth—
I hope you travel, sir, with licence?
Per. Yes.
Pol. I dare the safelier converse——How long, sir,
Since you left England?
Per. Seven weeks.
Pol. So lately!
You ha' not been with my lord ambassador!
Per. Not yet, sir.
Pol. Pray you, what news, sir, vents our climate?
I heard, last night, a most strange thing reported
By some of my lord's followers, and I long
To hear how 'twill be seconded!
Per. What was't, sir?
Pol. Marry, sir, of a raven, that should build
In a ship royal of the king's.
Per. This fellow,
Does he gull me, trow? or is gull'd? your name, sir?
Pol. My name is Politic Would-be.
Per. O, that speaks him.
A knight, sir?
Pol. A poor knight, sir.
Per. Your lady
Lies here, in Venice, for intelligence
Of tyres, and fashions, and behaviour,
Among the courtezans? the fine lady Would-be?
Pol. Yes, sir; the spider and the bee oftimes
Suck from one flower.
Per. Good sir Politic!
I cry you mercy; I have heard much of you:
'Tis true, sir, of your raven.
Pol. On your knowledge?
Per. Yes, and your lion's whelping in the Tower.
Pol. Another whelp!
Per. Another, sir.
Pol. Now, Heaven!
What prodigies be these! The fires at Berwick!
And the new star! these things concurring, strange!
And full of omen! Saw you these meteors?
Per. I did, sir.
Pol. Fearful! Pray you, sir, confirm me,
Were there three porpoises seen above the bridge,
As they give out?
Per. Six, and a sturgeon, sir.
Pol. I am astonish'd!
Per. Nay, sir, be not so;
I'll tell you a greater prodigy than these——
Pol. What should these things portend!
Per. The very day
(Let me be sure) that I put forth from London,
There was a whale discover'd in the river,
As high as Woolwich, that had waited there
(Few know how many months) for the subversion
Of the Stode fleet.
Pol. Is't possible? Believe it,
'Twas either sent from Spain, or the archdukes!
Spinola's whale, upon my life, my credit!
Will they not leave these projects? Worthy sir,
Some other news.
Per. Faith, Stone, the fool, is dead;
And they do lack a tavern-fool extremely.
Pol. Is Mass' Stone dead!
Per. He's dead, sir: Why, I hope
You thought him not immortal? O, this knight
(Were he well known,) would be a precious thing
To fit our English stage! He that should write
But such a fellow, should be thought to feign
Extremely, if not maliciously.
Pol. Stone dead!
Per. Dead. Lord! how deeply, sir, you apprehend it?
He was no kinsman to you?
Pol. That I know of.
Well! that same fellow was an unknown fool.
Per. And yet you knew him, it seems?
Pol. I did so, sir.

I knew him one of the most dangerous heads
Living within the state, and so I held him.
Per. Indeed, sir?
Pol. While he liv'd, in action.
He has receiv'd weekly intelligence,
Upon my knowledge, out of the Low Countries,
(For all parts of the world) in cabbages;
And those dispens'd again to ambassadors,
In oranges, musk-melons, apricots,
Lemons, pome-citrons, and such like: sometimes
In Colchester oysters, and your Selsey cockles.
Per. You make me wonder!
Pol. Sir, upon my knowledge.
Nay, I have observ'd him, at your public ordinary
Take his advertisement from a traveller
(A conceal'd statesman) in a trencher of meat;
And, instantly, before the meal was done,
Convey an answer in a tooth-pick.
Per. Strange!
How could this be, sir?
Pol. Why the meat was cut
So like his character, and so laid, as he
Must easily read the cypher.
Per. I have heard,
He could not read, sir.
Pol. So 'twas given out,
(In polity) by those that did employ him;
But he could read, and had your languages,
And to't, as sound a noddle—
Per. I have heard, sir,
That your Babiouns were spies; and that they were
A kind of subtle nation, near to China.
Pol. Ay, ay, your Mamuluchi. Faith, they had
Their hand in a French plot or two; but they
Were so extremely given to women, as
They made discovery of all: yet I
Had my advices here, on Wednesday last,
From one of their own coat, they were return'd,
Made their relation, as the fashion is,
And now stand fair for fresh employment.
Per. 'Hart!
This Sir Politic will be ignorant of nothing.
It seems, sir, you know all?
Pol. Not all, sir. But
I have some general notions; I do love
To note, and to observe: though I live out,
Free from the active torrent, yet I'd mark
The currents and the passages of things,
For mine own private use; and know the ebbs
And flows of state.
Per. Believe it, sir, I hold
Myself in no small tie unto my fortunes,
For casting me thus luckily upon you;
Whose knowledge, if your bounty equal it,
May do me great assistance, in instruction
For my behaviour, and my bearing, which
Is yet so rude, and raw——
Pol. Why? came you forth
Empty of rules, for travel?
Per. Faith, I had
Some common ones, from out that vulgar grammar,
Which he that cried Italian to me taught me.
Pol. Why, this it is, that spoils all our brave bloods,
Trusting our hopeful gentry unto pedants,
Fellows of out-side, and mere bark. You seem
To be a gentleman, of ingenious race—
I not profess it, but my fate hath been
To be, where I have been consulted with,
In this high kind, touching some great men's sons,
Persons of blood and honour—
Per. Who be these, sir?

SCENE II.

MOSCA, POLITIC, PEREGRINE, VOLPONE, NANO, *and* GREGE.

Mos. Under that window, there't must be. The same.
Pol. Fellows, to mount a bank! Did your instructor
In the dear tongues, never discourse to you
Of the Italian mountebanks?
Per. Yes, sir.
Pol. Why, here shall you see one.
Per. They are quack-salvers,
Fellows, that live by venting oils and drugs.
Pol. Was that the character he gave you of them?
Per. As I remember.
Pol. Pity his ignorance.
They are the only knowing men of Europe!
Great general scholars, excellent physicians,
Most admired statesmen, professed favourites,
And cabinet-counsellors to the greatest princes!
The only languaged men of all the world!
Per. And, I have heard, they are most lewd impostors;
Made all of terms and shreds; no less beliers
Of great men's favours, than their own vile med'cines;
Which they will utter, upon monstrous oaths:
Selling that drug for two-pence, ere they part,
Which they have valued at twelve crowns before.
Pol. Sir, calumnies are answered best with silence:
Yourself shall judge. Who is it mounts, my friends?
Mos. Scoto of Mantua, sir.
Pol. Is't he? Nay, then,
I'll proudly promise, sir, you shall behold
Another man, that has been phant'sied to you.
I wonder yet that he should mount his bank
Here, in this nook, that has been wont t'appear
In face of the Piazza! Here he comes.
Volp. Mount, Zany.
Gre. Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow.
Pol. See how the people follow him! he's a man
May write 10,000 crowns in bank here. Note,
Mark but his gesture: I do use to observe
The state he keeps, in getting up!
Per. 'Tis worth it, sir.
Volp. Most noble gent. and my worthy patrons, it may seem strange, that I, your *Scoto Mantuano*, who was ever wont to fix my bank in face of the public Piazza, near the shelter of

the Portico, to the *Procuratia*, should now (after eight months absence from this illustrious city of Venice) humbly retire myself into an obscure nook of the Piazza.

Pol. Did not I, now, object the same?

Per. Peace, sir.

Volp. Let me tell you: I am not (as your Lombard proverb saith) cold on my feet; or content to part with my commodities at a cheaper rate than I accustomed: look not for it. Nor that the calumnious reports of that impudent detractor, and shame to our profession, (Alessandro Buttone, I mean) who gave out, in public, I was condemned a' *Sforzato* to the gallics, for poisoning the cardinal Bembo's—cook, hath at all attached, much less dejected me. No, no, worthy gent. (to tell you true) I cannot endure to see the rabble of these ground *Ciarlitani*, that spread their cloaks on the pavement, as if they meant to do feats of activity, and then come in lamely, with their mouldy tales out of Boccacio, like stale Tabarine, the fabulist: some of them discoursing their travels, and of their tedious captivity in the Turks' galleys, when indeed (were the truth known) they were the Christians' galleys, where, very temperately, they eat bread, and drank water, as a wholesome penance (enjoined them by their confessors) for base pilferies.

Pol. Note but his bearing, and contempt of these.

Volp. These turdy-facy-nasty-paty-lousy-fartical rogues, with one poor groat's-worth of unprepared antimony, finely wrapt up in several *scartoccios*, are able, very well, to kill their twenty a-week, and play; yet, these meagre, starved spirits, who have half stopped the organs of their minds with earthly oppilations, want not their favourers among your shrivelled, sallad-eating artizans; who are overjoyed, that they may have their halfpenny-worth of physic, though it purge them into another world, 't makes no matter.

Pol. Excellent! ha' you heard better language, sir?

Volp. Well, let 'em go. And, gentlemen, honourable gentlemen, know, that for this time, our bank, being thus removed from the clamours of the Canaglia, shall be the scene of pleasure and delight; for I have nothing to sell, little or nothing to sell.

Pol. I told you, sir, his end.

Per. You did so, sir.

Volp. I protest, I, and my six servants, are not able to make of this precious liquor so fast as it is fetched away from my lodging, by gentlemen of your city; strangers of the *terra-firma*; worshipful merchants; ay, and senators too, who, ever since my arrival, have detained me to their uses, by their splendidous liberalities. And worthily: for, what avails your rich man to have his magazines stuffed with moscadelli, or of the purest grape, when his physicians prescribe him (on pain of death) to drink nothing but water, cocted with anniseeds? O, health! health! the blessing of the rich! the riches of the poor! who can buy thee at too dear a rate, since there is no enjoying this world without thee! Be not, then, so sparing of your purses, honourable gentlemen, as to abridge the natural course of life—

Per. You see his end?

Pol. Ay, is't not good?

Volp. For, when a humid flux, or catarrh, by the mutability of air, falls from your head into an arm, or shoulder, or any other part, take you a ducat, or your cecchine of gold, and apply to the place affected; see what good effect it can work. No, no, 'tis this blessed *unguento*, this rare extraction, that hath only power to disperse all malignant humours, that proceed either of hot, cold, moist, or windy causes—

Per. I would he had put in dry, too.

Pol. Pray you, observe.

Volp. To fortify the most indigest and crude stomach; ay, were it of one that, through extreme weakness, vomited blood, applying only a warm napkin to the place, after the unction and fricace: for the *vertigine* in the head, putting but a drop into your nostrils, likewise behind the ears; a most sovereign and approved remedy: the *mal-caduco*, cramps, convulsions, paralysics, epilepsies, *tremor-cordis*, retired nerves, ill vapours of the spleen, stoppings of the liver, the stone, the strangury, *hernia ventosa*, *iliaco passio*; stops a *disenteria* immediately; easeth the torsion of the small guts, and cures *melancholia hypocondriaca*, being taken and applied according to my printed receipt. For this is the physician, this the medicine; this counsels, this cures; this gives the direction, this works the effect [*Pointing to his bill and his glass*]: and (in sum) both together may be termed an abstract of the theoric and practice in the Æsculapian art. 'Twill cost you eight crowns. And, Zan Fritada, pr'ythee sing a verse, *extempore*, in honour of it.

Pol. How do you like him, sir?

Per. Most strangely, I!

Pol. Is not his language rare?

Per. But alchemy,
I never heard the like; or Broughton's books.

SONG.

Had old Hippocrates, or Galen,
(That to their books put med'cines all in)
But known this secret, they had never
(Of which they will be guilty ever)
Been murderers of so much paper,
Or wasted many a hurtless taper:
No Indian drug had e'er been famed,
Tobacco, sassafras not named;
Ne yet, of guacum *one small stick, sir,*
Nor Raymund Lully's great elixir.
Ne had been known the Danish gonswart;
Or Paracelsus with his long sword.

Per. All this yet will not do; eight crowns is high.

Volp. No more!—Gentlemen, If I had but time to discourse to you the miraculous effects of this

my oil, sirnamed *Oglio del Scoto;* with the countless catalogue of those I have cured of the aforesaid, and many more diseases; the patents and privileges of all the princes and commonwealths of Christendom; or but the depositions of those that appeared on my part before the signiory of the Sanita, and most learned College of Physicians; where I was authorised, upon notice taken of the admirable virtues of my medicaments, and mine own excellency in matter of rare and unknown secrets, not only to disperse them publicly in this famous city, but in all the territories that happily joy under the government of the most pious and magnificent states of Italy. But may some other gallant fellow say, O, there be divers that make profession to have as good and as experimented receipts as yours: Indeed, very many have essayed, like apes, in imitation of that which is really and essentially in me, to make of this oil; bestowed great cost in furnaces, stills, alembecks, continual fires, and preparation of the ingredients, (as indeed there goes to it six hundred several simples, besides some quantity of human fat, for the conglutination, which we buy of the anatomists,) but, when these practitioners come to the last decoction. blow, blow, puff, puff, and all flies *in fumo:* Ha, ha, ha!—Poor wretches! I rather pity their folly and indiscretion, than their loss of time and money; for those may be recovered by industry; but to be a fool born is a disease incurable. For myself, I always from my youth have endeavoured to get the rarest secrets, and book them; either in exchange or for money: I spared nor cost, nor labour, where any thing was worthy to be learned. And, gentlemen! honourable gentlemen! I will undertake (by virtue of chemical art) out of the honourable hat that covers your head, to extract the four elements, that is to say, the fire, air, water, and earth, and return you your felt without burn or stain. For, whilst others have been at the balloo, I have been at my book: And am now past the craggy paths of study, and come to the flow'ry plains of honour and reputation.

Pol. I do assure you, sir, that is his aim.

Volp. But, to our price.

Per. And that withal, Sir Pol.

Volp. You all know, honourable gentlemen! I never valued this ampulla or vial at less than eight crowns; but, for this time, I am content to be deprived of it for six; six crowns is the price; and less in courtesy I know you cannot offer me: Take it, or leave it; howsoever, both it and I am at your service. I ask you not, as the value of the thing, for then I should demand of you a thousand crowns; so the Cardinals Montalto, Fernese, the great Duke of Tuscany, my gossip, with divers other princes, have given me; but I despise money: Only to shew my affection to you, honourable gentlemen! and your illustrious state here, I have neglected the messages of these princes, mine own offices, framed my journey hither, only to present you with the fruits of my travels! Tune your voices once more to the touch of your instruments, and give the honourable assembly some delightful recreation!

Per. What monstrous and most painful circumstance
Is here, to get some three or four gazettes!
Some threepence i' the whole, for that 'twill come to.

SONG.

You that would last long, list to my song,
Make no more coil, but buy of this oil.
Would you be ever fair and young?
Stout of teeth, and strong of tongue?
Tart of palate, quick of ear?
Sharp of sight, of nostril clear?
Moist of hand, and light of foot?
Or (I will come nearer to't)
Would you live free from all diseases?
Do the act your mistress pleases?
Yea, fright all aches from your bones?
Here's a med'cine for the nonce.

Volp. Well, I am in a humour, at this time, to make a present of the small quantity my coffer contains: To the rich in courtesy, and to the poor for God's sake. Wherefore now mark: I asked you six crowns, and six crowns at other times you have paid me; you shall not give me six crowns, nor five, nor four, nor three, nor two, nor one, nor half a ducat; no, nor a muccinigo: Six—pence it will cost you, or six hundred pound—expect no lower price; for, by the banner of my front, I will not bate a bagatine, that I will have only a pledge of your loves, to carry something from amongst you, to show I am not contemned by you. Therefore now toss your handkerchiefs chearfully, chearfully! and be advertised, that the first heroic spirit that deigns to grace me with a handkerchief, I will give it a little remembrance of something besides, shall please it better than if I had presented it with a double pistolet.

Per. Will you be that heroic spark, sir Pol?
O see! the window has prevented you.

[CELIA *at the window throws down her handkerchief.*

Volp. Lady, I kiss your bounty; and, for this timely grace you have done your poor Scoto of Mantua, I will return you, over and above my oil, a secret of that high and inestimable nature, shall make you for ever enamour'd on that minute, wherein your eye first descended on so mean, yet not altogether to be despis'd, an object. Here is a powder conceal'd in this paper, of which, if I should speak to the worth, nine thousand volumes were but as one page, that page as a line, that line as a word; so short is this pilgrimage of man, which some call life, to the expressing of it. Would I reflect on the price? Why, the whole world were but as an empire, that empire as a province, that province as a bank, that bank as a private purse, to the purchase of it. I will only tell you, it is the powder

that made Venus a goddess, given her by Apollo, that kept her perpetually young, cleared her wrinkles, firmed her gums, filled her skin, coloured her hair; from her, derived to Helen, and at the sack of Troy unfortunately lost: till now, in this our age, it was as happily recovered, by a studious antiquary, out of some ruins of Asia, who sent a moiety of it to the court of France, but much sophisticated, wherewith the ladies there now colour their hair. The rest, at this present, remains with me, extracted to a quintessence: So that, wherever it but touches, in youth, it perpetually preserves; in age, restores the complexion; seats your teeth, did they dance like virginal jacks, firm as a wall; makes them white as ivory, that were black as——

SCENE III.

CORVINO, POLITIC, *and* PEREGRINE.

Cor. 'Spite o' the devil, and my shame! come down here;
Come down: No house but mine to make your scene?
Signior Flaminio, will you down, sir? down?
What, is my wife your Franciscina, sir?
No windows on the whole piazza here,
To make your properties, but mine, but mine?
'Heart! ere to-morrow I shall be new christen'd,
And called the Pantalone di Besogniosi
About the town!
Per. What should this mean, sir Pol?
Pol. Some trick of state, believe it. I will home.
Per. It may be some design on you.
Pol. I know not.—I'll stand upon my guard.
Per. 'Tis your best, sir.
Pol. This three weeks, all my advices, all my letters,
They have been intercepted.
Per. Indeed, sir?
Best have a care.
Pol. Nay, so I will.
Per. This knight,
I may not lose him, for my mirth, till night.

SCENE IV.

VOLPONE *and* MOSCA.

Volp. O, I am wounded!
Mos. Where, sir?
Volp. Not without;
Those blows were nothing: I could bear them ever.
But angry Cupid, bolting from her eyes,
Hath shot himself into me, like a flame;
Where, now, he flings about his burning heat,
As in a furnace, some ambitious fire,
Whose vent is stopt. The fight is all within me.
I cannot live except thou help me, Mosca;
My liver melts, and I, without the hope
Of some soft air, from her refreshing breath,
Am but a heap of cinders.
Mos. 'Las, good sir,
Would you had never seen her!
Volp. Nay, would thou
Hadst never told me of her.
Mos. Sir, 'tis true;
I do confess I was unfortunate,
And you unhappy; but I'm bound in conscience,
No less than duty, to effect my best
To your release of torment; and I will, sir,
Volp. Dear Mosca, shall I hope?
Mos. Sir, more than dear!
I will not bid you to despair of aught
Within a human compass.
Volp. O, there spoke
My better angel! Mosca, take my keys,
Gold, plate, and jewels, all's at thy devotion,
Employ them how thou wilt; nay, coin me too,
So thou in this but crown my longings, Mosca.
Mos. Use but your patience.
Volp. So I have.
Mos. I doubt not
To bring success to your desires.
Volp. Nay, then,
I not repent me of my late disguise.
Mos. If you can horn him, sir, you need not.
Volp. True: besides I never meant him for my heir.
Is not the colour o' my beard and eye-brows
To make me known?
Mos. No jot.
Volp. I did it well.
Mos. So well, would I could follow you in mine
With half the happiness; and yet I would
Escape your epilogue.
Volp. But, were they gull'd
With a belief that I was Scoto?
Mos. Sir,
Scoto himself could hardly have distinguish'd—
I have not time to flatter you now, we'll part:
And as I prosper, so applaud my art. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

CORVINO, CELIA, *and* SERVITORE.

Corv. Death of mine honour, with the city's fool?
A juggling, tooth-drawing, prating mountebank;
And at a public window? where, whilst he
With his strain'd action, and his dole of faces,
To his drug-lecture draws your itching ears,
A crew of old, unmarried, noted lechers,
Stood leering up, like satyrs; and you smile
Most graciously! and fan your favours forth,
To give your hot spectators satisfaction:
What, was your mountebank their call, their whistle?
Or were you enamour'd on his copper rings;
His saffron jewel, with the toad-stone in't?
Or his embroider'd suit, with the cope-stitch
Made of a hearse-cloth? or his old tilt-feather?
Or his starch'd beard? Well, you shall have him; yes,
He shall come home, and minister unto you
The fricase for the mother: Or, let me see,
I think you had rather mount:—would you not mount?

Why, if you'll mount you may; yes truly, you may:
And so you may be seen down to th' foot.
Get you to a cittern, Lady Vanity!
And be a dealer with the virtuous man;
Make one: I'll but protest myself a cuckold,
And save your dowry. I am a Dutchman, I!
For, if you thought me an Italian,
You would be damn'd ere you did this, you whore:
Thou'dst tremble to imagine, that the murder
Of father, mother, brother, all thy race,
Should follow, as the subject of my justice!
Cel. Good sir, have patience.
Corv. What couldst thou propose
Less to thyself, than in this heat of wrath,
And stung with my dishonour, I should strike
This steel into thee, with as many stabs
As thou wert gaz'd upon with goatish eyes?
Cel. Alas, sir, be appeas'd! I could not think
My being at the window should more, now,
Move your impatience, than at other times.
Corv. No! not to seek and entertain a parley
With a known knave, before a multitude?
You were an actor with your handkerchief,
Which he most sweetly kiss'd in the receipt,
And might, no doubt, return it with a letter,
And 'point the place where you might meet: Your sisters,
Your mothers, or your aunts, might serve the turn.
Cel. Why, dear sir, when do I make these excuses?
Or ever stir abroad, but to the church?
And that so seldom——
Corv. Well, it shall be less;
And thy restraint before was liberty,
To what I now decree: and therefore mark me.
First, I will have this bawdy light damn'd up;
And, till't be done, some two or three yards off
I'll chalk a line, o'er which, if thou but chance
To set thy desperate foot, more hell, more horror,
More wild remorseless rage, shall seize on thee,
Than on a conjurer, that had heedless left
His circle's safety, ere his devil was laid.
Then here's a lock, which I will hang upon thee;
And, now I think on't, I will keep thee backwards;
Thy lodging shall be backwards; thy walks backwards;
Thy prospect all be backwards; and no pleasure
That thou shalt know but backwards: Nay, since you force
My honest nature, know, it is your own
Being too open makes me use you thus.
Since you will not contain your subtle nostrils
In a sweet room, but they must snuff the air
Of rank and sweaty passengers——One knocks.
[*Knock within.*
Away, and be not seen, pain of thy life;
Not look toward the window: if thou dost——
Nay, stay, hear this; let me not prosper, whore!
But I will make thee an anatomy,
Dissect thee mine own self, and read a lecture
Upon thee, to the city, and in public.
Away! [*Ex.* CEL.] Who's there?
Ser. 'Tis Signior Mosca, sir.

SCENE VI.

CORVINO *and* MOSCA.

Corv. Let him come in, his master's dead: There's yet
Some good to help the bad. My Mosca, welcome,
I guess your news!
Mos. I fear you cannot, sir.
Corv. Is't not his death?
Mos. Rather the contrary.
Corv. Not his recovery?
Mos. Yes, sir.
Corv. I am curs'd,
I am bewitch'd; my crosses meet to vex me.
How, how, how, how?
Mos. Why, sir, with Scoto's oil!
Corbaccio and Voltore brought of it,
Whilst I was busy in an inner room——
Corv. Death! That damn'd mountebank!—but, for the law,
Now I could kill the rascal:—It cannot be
His oil should have that virtue. Ha' not I
Known him, a common rogue, come fidling in
To th' Osteria with a tumbling whore;
And, when he has done all his forc'd tricks, been glad
Of a poor spoonful of dead wine with flies in't?
It cannot be. All his ingredients
Are a sheep's gall, a roasted bitch's marrow,
Some few sod earwigs, pounded caterpillars,
A little capon's grease, and fasting spittle:
I know 'em to a dram.
Mos. I know not, sir;
But some on't, there they pour'd into his ears,
Some in his nostrils, and recover'd him;
Applying but the fricase.
Corv. Pox o' that fricase!
Mos. And since, to seem the more officious,
And flatt'ring of his health, there, they have had
At extreme fees, the College of Physicians,
Consulting on him, how they might restore him;
Where one would have a cataplasm of spices,
Another, a flay'd ape clapp'd to his breast;
A third would ha' it a dog, a fourth an oil,
With wild cat's skin: At last, they all resolv'd,
That, to preserve him, was no other means
But some young woman must be straight sought out,
Lusty, and full of juice, to sleep by him;
And, to this service, most unhappily,
And most unwillingly, am I now employ'd,
Which here I thought to pre-acquaint you with,
For your advice, since it concerns you most;
Because I would not do that thing might cross
Your ends, on whom I have my whole dependence, sir:
Yet, if I do it not, they may debate
My slackness to my patron, work me out
Of his opinion; and there, all your hopes,
Ventures, or whatsoever, are all frustrate.

I do but tell you, sir. Besides, they are all
Now striving, who shall first present him. Therefore—
I could entreat you, briefly, conclude somewhat:
Prevent 'em if you can.
Corv. Death to my hopes!
This is my villanous fortune! Best to hire
Some common courtezan?
Mos. Ay, I thought on that, sir.
But they are all so subtle, full of art,
And age again doting and flexible,
So as—I cannot tell—we may perchance
Light on a quean may cheat us all.
Corv. 'Tis true.
Mos. No, no; it must be one that has no tricks, sir,
Some simple thing, a creature made unto it;
Some wench you may command. Ha' you no kinswoman?
Gad so—Think, think, think, think, think, think, think, sir.
One o'th' doctors offer'd there his daughter.
Corv. How!
Mos. Yes, Signior Lupo, the physician
Corv. His daughter!
Mos. And a virgin, sir. Why? Alas!
He knows the state of's body, and what it is;
That nought can warm his blood, sir, but a fever;
Nor any incantation raise his spirit:
A long forgetfulness hath seized that part.
Besides, sir, who shall know it? some one or two—
Corv. I pr'ythee, give me leave. If any man
But I had had this luck—The thing in't self,
I know is nothing—Wherefore should not I
As well command my blood and my affections
As this dull doctor! In the point of honour,
The cases are all one, of wife and daughter.
Mos. I hear him coming.
Corv. She shall do't: 'Tis done.
'Slight, if this doctor, who is not engaged,
Unless't be for his counsel, which is nothing,
Offer his daughter, what should I, that am
So deeply in? I will prevent him, wretch!
Covetous wretch! Mosca, I have determined.
Mos. How, sir?
Corv. We'll make all sure. The party you wot of,
Shall be mine own wife, Mosca.
Mos. Sir, the thing
(But that I would not seem to counsel you)
I should have mention'd to you at the first:
And make your count, you have cut all their throats.
Why! 'tis directly taking a possession!
And, in his next fit, we may let him go.
'Tis but to pull the pillow from his head,
And he is throttled: 't had been done before,
But for your scrupulous doubts.
Corv. Ay, a plague on't,
My conscience fools my wit. Well, I'll be brief,
And so be thou, lest they should be before us:
Go home, prepare him, tell him with what zeal
And willingness I do it; swear it was,
On the first hearing (as thou may'st do truly)
Mine own free motion.
Mos. Sir, I warrant you,
I'll so possess him with it, that the rest
Of his starved clients shall be banish'd all;
And only you received. But come not, sir,
Until I send, for I have something else
To ripen for your good—you must not know't.
Corv. But do not you forget to send now.
Mos. Fear not. [*Exit* MOS.

SCENE VII.

CORVINO *and* CELIA.

Corv. Where are you, wife? my Celia! wife! what, blubbering?
Come, dry those tears. I think, thou thought'st me in earnest?
Ha! by this light, I talk'd so but to try thee.
Methinks the lightness of the occasion
Should ha' confirm'd thee. Come, I am not jealous.
Cel. No!
Corv. Faith, I am not, I, nor never was:
It is a poor, unprofitable humour.
Do not I know, if women have a will,
They'll do 'gainst all the watches o' the world?
And that the fiercest spies are tamed with gold?
Tut, I am confident in thee, thou shalt see't:
And see, I'll give thee cause too to believe it.
Come, kiss me. Go and make thee ready straight,
In all thy best attire, thy choicest jewels,
Put 'em all on, and, with 'em, thy best looks:
We are invited to a solemn feast,
At old Volpone's, where it shall appear
How far I'm free from jealousy or fear. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

MOSCA.

Mos. I fear I shall begin to grow in love
With my dear self, and my most prosp'rous parts,
They do so spring and burgeon; I can feel
A whimsie i' my blood: (I know not how)
Success hath made me wanton. I could skip
Out of my skin now, like a subtle snake,
I am so limber. Oh! your parasite
Is a most precious thing, dropt from above,
Not bred 'mongst clods and clot-poles here on earth.
I muse, the mystery was not made a science,
It is so liberally profest! Almost
All the wise world is little else in nature,
But parasites, or sub-parasites. And yet,

I mean not those that have your bare town-art,
To know who's fit to feed 'em; have no house,
No family, no care, and therefore mould
Tales for men's ears, to bait that sense; or get
Kitchen-invention, and some stale receipts
To please the belly, and the groin; nor those,
With their court-dog tricks, that can fawn and fleer,
Make their revenue out of legs and faces,
Echo my lord, and lick away a moth:
But your fine, elegant rascal, that can rise,
And stoop, almost together, like an arrow;
Shoot through the air as nimbly as a star;
Turn short, as doth a swallow; and be here
And there, and here and yonder, all at once;
Present to any humour, all occasion;
And change a visor, swifter than a thought!
This is the creature, had the art born with him;
Toils not to learn it, but doth practise it
Out of most excellent nature: And such sparks
Are the true parasites, others but their zanies.

SCENE III.

MOSCA *and* BONARIO.

Mos. Who's this? Bonario? Old Corbaccio's son!
The person I was bound to seek. Fair sir,
You are hap'ly met.
Bon. That cannot be, by thee.
Mos. Why, sir?
Bon. Nay, pr'ythee know thy way, and leave me:
I would be loth to interchange discourse
With such a mate as thou art.
Mos. Courteous sir,
Scorn not my poverty.
Bon. Not I, by Heav'n:
But thou shalt give me leave to hate thy baseness.
Mos. Baseness?
Bon. Ay, answer me, is not thy sloth
Sufficient argument? thy flattery?
Thy means of feeding?
Mos. Heav'n be good to me!
These imputations are too common, sir,
And eas'ly stuck on virtue, when she's poor;
You are unequal to me, and howe'er
Your sentence may be righteous, yet you are not,
That, e'er you know me, thus proceed in censure:
St Mark bear witness 'gainst you, 'tis inhuman.
Bon. What? does he weep? the sign is soft and good!
I do repent me, that I was so harsh.
Mos. 'Tis true, that, sway'd by strong necessity,
I am enforced to eat my careful bread
With too much obsequy; 'tis true, beside,
That I am fain to spin mine own poor raiment
Out of my mere observance, being not born
To a free fortune; but that I have done
Base offices, in rending friends asunder,
Dividing families, betraying counsels,
Whispering false lies, or mining men with praises,
Train'd their credulity with perjuries,
Corrupted chastity, or am in love
With mine own tender ease, but would not rather
Prove the most rugged and laborious course,
That might redeem my present estimation;
Let me here perish in all hope of goodness.
Bon. This cannot be a personated passion!
I was to blame, so to mistake thy nature;
Pri'thee forgive me; and speak out thy business.
Mos. Sir, it concerns you; and though I may seem
At first to make a main offence in manners,
And in my gratitude unto my master;
Yet, for the pure love which I bear all right,
And hatred of the wrong, I must reveal it.
This very hour your father is in purpose
To disinherit you—
Bon. How!
Mos. And thrust you forth,
As a mere stranger to his blood; 'tis true, sir:
The work no way engageth me, but, as
I claim an interest in the general state
Of goodness and true virtue, which I hear
T' abound in you; and, for which mere respect,
Without a second aim, sir, I have done it.
Bon. This tale hath lost thee much of the late trust
Thou hadst with me; it is impossible:
I know not how to lend it any thought,
My father should be so unnatural.
Mos. It is a confidence that well becomes
Your piety; and form'd, no doubt, it is
From your own simple innocence; which makes
Your wrong more monstrous and abhorr'd. But, sir,
I now will tell you more. This very minute
It is, or will be, doing: And, if you
Shall be but pleased to go with me, I'll bring you
(I dare not say where you shall see, but) where
Your ear shall be a witness of the deed;
Hear yourself written bastard; and profess'd
The common issue of the earth.
Bon. I'm 'maz'd!
Mos. Sir, if I do it not, draw your just sword,
And score your vengeance on my front and face;
Mark me your villain: You have too much wrong,
And I do suffer for you, sir. My heart
Weeps blood, in anguish—
Bon. Lead. I follow thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

VOLPONE, NANO, ANDROGYNO, *and* CASTRONE.

Volp. Mosca stays long, methinks. Bring forth your sports,
And help to make the wretched time more sweet.
Nan. Dwarf, fool, and eunuch, well met here we be.
A question it were now, whether of us three,
Being all the known delicates of a rich man,
In pleasing him, claim the precedency can?
Cas. I claim for myself.
And. And so doth the fool.
Nan. 'Tis foolish indeed: let me set you both to school.

First, for your dwarf, he's little and witty,
And every thing, as it is little, is pretty;
Else, why do men say to a creature of my shape,
So soon as they see him, it's a pretty little ape?
And why a pretty ape? but for pleasing imitation
Of greater men's actions, in a ridiculous fashion.
Beside, this feat body of mine doth not crave
Half the meat, drink, and cloth, one of your bulk will have.
Admit your fool's face be the mother of laughter,
Yet, for his brain, it must always come after:
And though that do feed him, it's a pitiful case,
His body is beholding to such a bad face.
Volp. Who's there? my couch, away, look, Nano, see: [*One knocks.*
Give me my caps, first—go, enquire. Now, Cupid,
Send it be Mosca, and with fair return.
Nan. It is the beauteous madam——
Volp. Would-be—is it?
Nan. The same.
Volp. Now, torment on me! 'squire her in,
For she will enter, or dwell here for ever.
Nay, quickly, that my fit were past. I fear
A second hell too, that my loathing this
Will quite expel my appetite to the other:
Would she were taking, now, her tedious leave.
Lord, how it threats me, what I am to suffer!

SCENE IV.

Lady, VOLPONE, NANO, *and two Women.*

Lady. I thank you, good sir. Pray you signify
Unto your patron I am here. This band
Shews not my neck enough (I trouble you, sir,
Let me request you bid one of my women
Come hither to me;) in good faith, I am drest
Most favourably to-day; it is no matter,
'Tis well enough. Look, see, these petulant things!
How they have done this!
Volp. I do feel the fever
Entering in at mine ears; O, for a charm
To fright it hence.
Lady. Come nearer: is this curl
In his right place? or this? why is this higher
Than all the rest? you ha' not wash'd your eyes yet?
Or do they not stand even i'your head?
Where's your fellow? call her.
Nan. Now, St Mark
Deliver us; anon she'll beat her women,
Because her nose is red.
Lady. I pray you, view
This tire, forsooth: are all things apt, or no?
Wom. One hair a little, here, sticks out, forsooth.
Lady. Does't so, forsooth? and where was your dear sight
When it did so, forsooth? what now? bird-ey'd?
And you too? pray you both approach, and mend it.
Now (by that light) I muse, you're not asham'd!
I, that have preach'd these things so oft unto you,
Read you the principles, argued all the grounds,
Disputed every fitness, every grace,
Called you to counsel of so frequent dressings—
Nan. More carefully, than of your fame or honour.
Lady. Made you acquainted, what an ample dowry
The knowledge of these things would be unto you,
Able, alone, to get you noble husbands
At your return: and you thus to neglect it!
Besides, you seeing what a curious nation
Th' Italians are, what will they say of me?
The English lady cannot dress herself;
Here's a fine imputation to our country!
Well, go your ways, and stay i'the next room.
This fucus was too coarse too, it's no matter.
Good sir, you'll give 'em entertainment?
Volp. The storm comes toward me.
Lady. How does my Volp?
Volp. Troubled with noise, I cannot sleep: I dream'd
That a strange fury enter'd, now, my house,
And, with the dreadful tempest of her breath,
Did cleave my roof asunder.
Lady. Believe me, and I
Had the most fearful dream, could I remember't—
Volp. Out on my fate! I ha' given her the occasion
How to torment me: she will tell me hers.
Lady. Methought, the golden mediocrity
Polite and delicate——
Volp. O, if you do love me,
No more; I sweat, and suffer, at the mention
Of any dream; feel, how I tremble yet.
Lady. Alas, good soul! the passion of the heart!
Seed-pearl were good now, boil'd with syrup of apples,
Tincture of gold, and coral, citron-pills,
Your elicampane root, myrobalanes—
Volp. Ah me, I have ta'en a grasshopper by the wing.
Lady. Burnt silk and amber, you have muscadel
Good i'the house—
Volp. You will not drink, and part?
Lady. No, fear not that. I doubt we shall not get
Some English saffron (half a drachm would serve)
Your sixteen cloves, a little musk, dried mints,
Bugloss, and barley-meal—
Volp. She's in again;
Before I feign'd diseases, now I have one.
Lady. And these applied, with a right scarlet cloth—
Volp. Another flood of words! a very torrent!
Lady. Shall I, sir, make you a poultice?
Volp. No, no, no;
I'm very well: you need prescribe no more.
Lady. I have a little studied physic; but now
I'm all for music; save, i'the forenoons,
An hour or two, for painting. I would have
A lady, indeed, t'have all, letters and arts,

Be able to discourse, to write, to paint,
But principal (as Plato holds) your music
(And so does wise Pythagoras, I take it)
Is your true rapture; when there is consent
In face, in voice, and clothes; and is indeed,
Our sex's chiefest ornament.
Volp. The poet,
As old in time as Plato, and as knowing,
Says, that your highest female grace is silence.
Lady. Which o' your poets? Petrarch? or Tasso? or Dante?
Guarini? Ariosto? Aretine?
Cieco di Hadria? I have read them all.
Volp. Is every thing a cause to my destruction?
Lady. I think I ha' two or three of 'em about me.
Volp. The sun, the sea, will sooner both stand still,
Than her eternal tongue! nothing can 'scape it.
Lady. Here's Pastor Fido.
Volp. Profess obstinate silence;
That's now my safest.
Lady. All our English writers,
I mean such as are happy in th' Italian,
Will deign to steal out of this author mainly;
Almost as much, as from Montaigne,
He has so modern and facile a vein,
Fitting the time, and catching the court-ear;
Your Petrarch is more passionate, yet he,
In days of sonnetting, trusting 'em, with much:
Dante is hard, and few can understand him.
But, for a desperate wit, there's Aretine!
Only, his pictures are a little obscene—
You mark me not?
Volp. Alas, my mind's perturb'd.
Lady. Why, in such cases, we must cure ourselves,
Make use of our philosophy—
Volp. Oh me!
Lady. And, as we find our passions do rebel,
Encounter 'em with reason, or divert 'em,
By giving scope unto some other humour
Of lesser danger; as in politic bodies,
There's nothing more doth overwhelm the judgment,
And clouds the understanding, than too much
Settling and fixing, and (as 'twere) subsiding
Upon one object. For the incorporating
Of these same outward things, into that part,
Which we call mental, leaves some certain fæces
That stop the organs, and, as Plato says,
Assassinates our knowledge.
Volp. Now, the spirit
Of patience help me!
Lady. Come, in faith I must
Visit you more a-days, and make you well:
Laugh, and be lusty.
Volp. My good angels save me!
Lady. There was but one sole man in all the world,
With whom I e'er could sympathise; and he
Would lie you often three or four hours together
To hear me speak; and be sometime so rapp'd,
As he would answer me quite from the purpose
Like you, and you are like him, just. I'll discourse,
And't be but only, sir, to bring you asleep,
How we did spend our time and loves together
For some six years.
Volp. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh!
Lady. For we were Coætanei, and brought up—
Volp. Some power, some fate, some fortune rescue me!

SCENE V.

MOSCA, *Lady, and* VOLPONE.

Mos. God save you, madam.
Lady. Good sir.
Volp. Mosca! Welcome,
Welcome to my redemption.
Mos. Why, sir?
Volp. Oh,
Rid me of this my torture, quickly, there;
My madam, with the everlasting voice:
The bells, in time of pestilence, ne'er made
Like noise, or were in that perpetual motion!
The cock-pit comes not near it. All my house,
But now, steam'd like a bath with her thick breath.
A lawyer could not have been heard; nor scarce
Another woman, such a hail of words
She has let fall. For hell's sake rid her hence.
Mos. Has she presented?
Volp. O, I do not care,
I'll take her absence upon any price,
With any loss.
Mos. Madam—
Lady. I ha' brought your patron
A toy, a cap here, of mine own work—
Mos. 'Tis well.
I had forgot to tell you, I saw your knight
Where you'd little think it—
Lady. Where?
Mos. Marry,
Where yet, if you make haste, you may apprehend him,
Rowing upon the water in a gondola,
With the most cunning courtezan of Venice.
Lady. Is't true?
Mos. Pursue 'em, and believe your eyes:
Leave me to make your gift. I knew 'twould take.
For lightly they that use themselves most licence,
Are still most jealous.
Volp. Mosca, hearty thanks,
For thy quick fiction, and delivery of me.
Now to my hopes, what say'st thou?
Lady. But do you hear, sir?—
Volp. Again! I fear a paroxysm.
Lady. Which way
Row'd they together?
Mos. Toward the Rialto.
Lady. I pray you lend me your dwarf.
Mos. I pray you take him.
Your hopes, sir, are like happy blossoms fair,
And promise timely fruit, if you will stay
But the maturing; keep you at your couch,

Corbaccio will arrive strait with the will:
When he is gone, I'll tell you more.
Volp. My blood,
My spirits are returned; I am alive:
And like your wanton gamester at Primero,
Whose thought had whisper'd to him not go less,
Methinks I lie and draw—for an encounter.

SCENE VI.

MOSCA *and* BONARIO.

Mos. Sir, here conceal'd you may hear all.
But pray you
Have patience, sir; the same's your father knocks:
[*One knocks.*
I am compell'd to leave you.
Bon. Do so. Yet
Cannot my thought imagine this a truth.

SCENE VII.

MOSCA, CORVINO, CELIA, BONARIO, *and* VOLPONE.

Mos. Death on me! you are come too soon! what meant you?
Did not I say I would send?
Corv. Yes, but I fear'd
You might forget it, and then they prevent us.
Mos. Prevent? Did e'er man haste so for his horns?
A courtier would not ply it so for a place.
Well, now there's no helping it, stay here,
I'll presently return.
Corv. Where are you, Celia?
You know not wherefore I have brought you hither?
Cel. Not well, except you told me.
Corv. Now I will:
Hark hither.
Mos. Sir, your father hath sent word,
[*To* BONARIO.
It will be half an hour ere he come;
And therefore, if you please to walk the while
Into that gallery—at the upper end,
There are some books to entertain the time:
And I'll take care no man shall come unto you, sir.
Bon. Yes, I will stay there. I do doubt this fellow.
[*Exit.*
Mos. There, he is far enough; he can hear nothing:
And for his father, I can keep him off.
Corv. Nay, now, there is no starting back, and therefore
Resolve upon it: I have so decreed.
It must be done. Nor would I move't afore,
Because I would avoid all shifts and tricks
That might deny me.
Cel. Sir, let me beseech you,
Affect not these strange trials; if you doubt
My chastity, why lock me up for ever:
Make me the heir of darkness. Let me live
Where I may please your fears, if not your trust.
Corv. Believe it, I have no such humour, I.
All that I speak I mean, yet I am not mad;
Not horn-mad, see you. Go too, shew yourself
Obedient, and a wife.
Cel. O Heaven!
Corv. I say it, do so.
Cel. Was this the train?
Corv. I have told you reasons;
What the physicians have set down; how much
It may concern me; what my engagements are;
My means; and the necessity of those means
For my recovery: Wherefore, if you be
Loyal, and mine, be won, respect my venture.
Cel. Before your honour?
Corv. Honour? Tut, a breath;
There's no such thing in nature: A mere term
Invented to awe fools. What is my gold
The worse, for touching? Cloths, for being look'd on?
Why, this's no more. An old decrepit wretch,
That has no sense, or sinew; takes his meat
With others fingers; only knows to gape
When you do scald his gums; a voice; a shadow;
And what can this man hurt you?
Cel. Lord! what spirit is this hath enter'd him?
Corv. And for your fame,
That's such a jig; as if I would go tell it,
Cry it, on the piazza! Who shall know it,
But he, that cannot speak it; and this fellow,
Whose lips are in my pocket? Save yourself,
If you'll proclaim't you may. I know no other,
Should come to know it.
Cel. Are Heav'n and saints then nothing?
Will they be blind or stupid?
Corv. How?
Cel. Good sir,
Be jealous still, emulate them; and think
What hate they burn with toward every sin.
Corv. I grant you; if I thought it were a sin,
I would not urge you. Should I offer this
To some young Frenchman, or hot Tuscan blood,
That had read Aretine, conn'd all his prints,
Knew every quirk within lust's labyrinth,
And were profess'd critic in letchery;
And I would look upon him, and applaud him,
This were a sin: But here, 'tis contrary;
A pious work, mere charity, for physic,
An honest polity, to assure mine own.
Cel. O Heav'n! canst thou suffer such a change?
Volp. Thou art mine honour, Mosca, and my pride,
My joy, my tickling, my delight! go, bring 'em.
Mos. Please you draw near, sir.
Corv. Come on, what———
You will not be rebellious? by that light———
Mos. Sir, Signior Corvino here is come to see you.
Volp. Oh!
Mos. And hearing of the consultation had,
So lately, for your health, is come to offer,
Or rather, sir, to prostitute———
Corv. Thanks, sweet Mosca.
Mos. Freely, unask'd, or unintreated——
Corv. Well.
Mos. (As the true, fervent instance of his love

His own most fair and proper wife; the beauty,
Only of price, in Venice——
Corv. 'Tis well urg'd.
Mos. To be your comfortress, and to preserve you.
Volp. Alas, I am past already! 'pray you, think him,
For his good care, and promptness; but for that
'Tis a vain labour, e'en to fight 'gainst Heaven;
Applying fire to a stone: (uh, uh, uh, uh,)
Making a dead leaf grow again. I take
His wishes gently, though; and you may tell him,
What I've done for him: marry, my state is hopeless!
Will him to pray for me; and t' use his fortune,
With reverence, when he comes to't.
Mos. Do you hear, sir?
Go to him, with your wife.
Corv. Heart of my father!
Wilt thou persist thus? come, I pray thee come,
Thou seest 'tis nothing, Celia, by this hand,
I shall grow violent. Come, do't, I say.
Cel. Sir, kill me rather: I will take down poison,
Eat burning coals, do any thing——
Corv. Be damn'd.
Heart! I will drag thee hence, home, by the hair;
Cry thee a strumpet, through the streets; rip up
Thy mouth, unto thine ears; and slit thy nose,
Like a raw rotchet——Do not tempt me, come.
Yield, I am loth——Death! I will buy some slave,
Whom I will kill, and bind thee to him, alive;
And at my window hang you forth; devising
Some monstrous crime, which I, in capital letters,
Will eat into thy flesh with aquafortis,
And burning corsives, on this stubborn breast.
Now, by the blood thou hast incens'd, I'll do't.
Cel. Sir, what you please you may, I am your martyr.
Corv. Be not thus obstinate, I ha' not deserv'd it:
Think who it is intreats you. 'Pr'y thee, sweet;
Good faith, thou shalt have jewels, gowns, attires,
What thou wilt think, and ask. Do you but kiss him,
Or touch him, but. For my sake. At my suit.
This once. No? not? I shall remember this.
Will you disgrace me, thus? do you thirst my undoing?
Mos. Nay, gentle lady, be advis'd.
Corv. No, no.
She has watch'd her time. God's precious, this is scurvy,
'Tis very scurvy: and you are——
Mos. Nay, good sir.
Corv. An arrant locust, by Heaven, a locust. Whore,
Crocodile, that hast thy tears prepar'd,
Expecting how thou'lt bid 'em flow.
Mos. Nay, 'pray you, sir, she will consider.
Cel. Would my life would serve to satisfy.
Corv. 'S'death, if she would but speak to him,
And save my reputation, 'twere somewhat;
But, spitefully to affect my utter ruin!
Mos. Ay, now you have put your fortune in her hands.
Why, i'faith, it is her modesty, I must quit her;
If you were absent, she would be more coming;
I know it; and dare undertake for her.
What woman can, before her husband? 'pray you,
Let us depart, and leave her here.
Corv. Sweet Celia,
Thou may'st redeem all, yet; I'll say no more:
If not, esteem yourself as lost. Nay, stay there.
[*Exit* CORV.
Cel. O God, and his good angels! whither, whither
Is shame fled human breasts? that with such ease
Men dare put off your honours, and their own!
Is that, which ever was a cause of life,
Now plac'd beneath the basest circumstance?
And modesty an exile made, for money?
Volp. Ay, in Corvino, and such earth-fed minds, [*Leaping off from his couch.*
That never tasted the true heav'n of love.
Assure thee, Celia, he that would sell thee,
Only for hope of gain, and that uncertain,
He would have sold his part of Paradise
For ready money, had he met a copeman.
Why art thou 'maz'd, to see me thus reviv'd?
Rather applaud thy beauty's miracle;
'Tis thy great work: that hath, not now alone,
But sundry times, rais'd me, in several shapes,
And, but this morning, like a mountebank,
To see thee at thy window. Ay, before
I would have left my practice, for thy love,
In varying figures, I would have contended
With the blue Proteus, or the horned flood.
Now art thou welcome.
Cel. Sir!
Volp. Nay, fly me not,
Nor let thy false imagination
That I was bed-rid, make thee think I am so:
Thou shalt not find it. I am, now, as fresh,
As hot, as high, and in as jovial plight,
As when (in that so celebrated scene,
At recitation of our comedy,
For entertainment of the great Valoys)
I acted young Antinous; and attracted
The eyes and ears of all the ladies present,
T' admire each graceful gesture, note, and footing.

SONG.

Come, my Celia, let us prove,
While we can, the sports of love;
Time will not be ours for ever,
He, at length, our good will sever;
Spend not then his gifts in vain.
Suns, that set, may rise again:
But if once we lose this light,
'Tis with us perpetual night.
Why should we defer our joys?
Fame and rumour are but toys.
Cannot we delude the eyes
Of a few poor household spies?
Or his easier ears beguile,
Thus removed by our wile?

'Tis no sin love's fruits to steal;
But the sweet thefts to reveal:
To be taken, to be seen,
These have crimes accounted been.

Cel. Some syren blast me, or dire lightning strike
This my offending face!
Volp. Why droops my Celia?
Thou hast, in place of a base husband, found
A worthy lover: use thy fortune well,
With secrecy and pleasure. See, behold,
What thou art queen of; not in expectation,
As I feed others; but possess'd and crown'd.
See here, a rope of pearl: and each more orient
Than that the brave Egyptian queen carous'd:
Dissolve, and drink 'em. See, a carbuncle,
May put out both the eyes of our St Mark;
A diamond would have bought Lollia Paulina,
When she came in, like star-light, hid with jewels,
That were the spoils of provinces; take these,
And wear, and lose 'em; yet remains an earring
To purchase them again, and this whole state.
A gem, but worth a private patrimony,
Is nothing: We will eat such at a meal.
The heads of parrots, tongues of nightingales,
The brains of peacocks, and of estriches,
Shall be our food; and, could we get the phœnix,
(Though nature lost her kind) she were our dish.
Cel. Good sir, these things might move a mind affected
With such delights; but I, whose innocence
Is all I can think wealthy, or worth th' enjoying,
And which once lost, I have nought to lose beyond it,
Cannot be taken with these sensual baits:
If you have conscience——
Volp. 'Tis the beggar's virtue.
If thou hast wisdom, hear me, Celia.
Thy baths shall be the juice of July-flowers,
Spirit of roses, and of violets,
The milk of unicorns, and panther's breath,
Gather'd in bags, and mix'd with Cretan wines.
Our drink shall be prepared gold, and amber;
Which we will take, until my roof whirl round
With the vertigo: And my dwarf shall dance,
My eunuch sing, my fool make up the antic,
Whilst we in changed shapes act Ovid's tales,
Thou like Europa now, and I like Jove;
Then I like Mars, and thou like Erycine;
So of the rest, 'till we have quite run through,
And wearied all the fables of the gods.
Then will I have thee in more modern forms,
Attired like some sprightly dame of France,
Brave Tuscan lady, or proud Spanish beauty;
Sometimes unto the Persian sophy's wife;
Or the grand signior's mistress; and, for change,
To one of our most artful courtezans,
Or some quick negro, or cold Russian;
And I will meet thee in as many shapes:
Where we may so transfuse our wand'ring souls
Out at our lips, and score up sums of pleasures,
That the curious shall not know
How to tell them as they flow;
And the envious, when they find
What their number is, be pin'd.

Cel. If you have ears that will be pierc'd, or eyes
That can be open'd; a heart, may be touch'd;
Or any part that yet sounds man about you;
If you have touch of holy saints, or Heav'n,
Do me the grace to let me 'scape. If not,
Be bountiful, and kill me. You do know,
I am a creature, hither ill betray'd,
By one, whose shame I would forget it were;
If you will deign me neither of these graces,
Yet feed your wrath, sir, rather than your lust;
(It is a vice comes nearer manliness)
And punish that unhappy crime of nature,
Which you miscall my beauty: flay my face,
Or poison it with ointments, for seducing
Your blood to this rebellion. Rub these hands,
With what may cause an eating leprosy,
E'en to my bones and marrow: Any thing
That may disfavour me, save in my honour.
And I will kneel to you, pray for you, pay down
A thousand hourly vows, sir, for your health;
Report, and think you virtuous——
Volp. Think me cold,
Frozen and impotent, and so report me!
That I had Nestor's hernia, thou wouldst think.
I do degenerate, and abuse my nation,
To play with opportunity thus long:
I should have done the act, and then have parley'd.
Yield, or I'll force thee.
Cel. O! just God.
Volp. In vain——
Bon. Forbear, foul ravisher, libidinous swine,
[*Leaping out from where* MOSCA *had placed him.*
Free the forc'd lady, or thou dy'st, impostor.
But that I'm loath to snatch thy punishment
Out of the hand of justice, thou should'st, yet,
Be made the timely sacrifice of vengeance,
Before this altar, and this dross, thy idol.
Lady, let's quit the place, it is the den
Of villany; fear nought, you have a guard:
And he, e'er long, shall meet his just reward.
[*Ex.* BON. *and* CEL.
Volp. Fall on me, roof, and bury me in ruin,
Become my grave, that wert my shelter. O!
I am unmask'd, unspirited, undone,
Betray'd to beggary, to infamy——

SCENE VIII.

MOSCA *and* VOLPONE.

Mos. Where shall I run, most wretched shame of men,
To beat out my unlucky brains!
Volp. Here, here.
What! dost thou bleed?
Mos. O, that his well-driv'n sword
Had been so covetous to have cleft me down,

Unto the navel, e'er I liv'd to see
My life, my hopes, my spirits, my patron, all
Thus desperately engaged, by my error.
Volp. Woe on thy fortune!
Mos. And my follies, sir.
Volp. Th' hast made me miserable.
Mos. And myself, sir.
Who would have thought he would have hearken'd so?
Volp. What shall we do?
Mos. I know not; if my heart
Could expiate the mischance, I'd pluck it out.
Will you be pleas'd to hang me, or cut my throat;
And I'll requite you, sir. Let's die like Romans,
Since we have liv'd like Grecians.
Volp. Hark! who's there?
I hear some footing officers, the Saffi,
[*They knock without.*
Come to apprehend us! I do feel the brand
Hissing already at my forehead: Now,
Mine ears are boring.
Mos. To your couch, sir, you
Make that place good however. Guilty men
Suspect what they deserve still. Signior Corbaccio!

SCENE IX.

CORBACCIO, MOSCA, VOLTORE, *and* VOLPONE.

Corb. Why! how now, Mosca?
Mos. O, undone, amaz'd, sir.
Your son (I know not by what accident)
Acquainted with your purpose to my patron,
Touching your will, and making him your heir,
Entered our house with violence, his sword drawn,
Sought for you, call'd you wretch, unnatural,
Vow'd he would kill you.
Corb. Me?
Mos. Yes, and my patron.
Corb. This act shall disinherit him indeed:
Here is the will.
Mos. 'Tis well, sir.
Corb. Right and well.
Be you as careful now for me.
Mos. My life, sir,
Is not more tender'd. I am only yours.
Corb. How does he? will he die shortly, think'st thou?
Mos. I fear he'll outlast May.
Corb. To-day?
Mos. No, last out May, sir.
Corb. Could'st thou not gi' him a dram?
Mos. O, by no means, sir.
Corb. Nay, I'll not bind you.
Volt. This is a knave, I see.
Mos. How, signior Voltore! did he hear me?
Volt. Parasite!
Mos. Who's that! O, sir, most timely welcome——
Volt. Scarce, to the discovery of your tricks, I fear.
You are his only; and mine also; are you not?
Mos. Who? I, Sir!
Volt. You, sir. What device is this about a will?
Mos. A plot for you, sir.
Volt. Come, put not your foists upon me; I shall scent 'em.
Mos. Did you not hear it?
Volt. Yes, I hear Corbaccio
Hath made your patron there, his heir.
Mos. 'Tis true,
By my device, drawn to it by my plot,
With hope——
Volt. Your patron should reciprocate;
And you have promis'd?
Mos. For your good I did, sir.
Nay more, I told his son, brought, hid him here,
Where he might hear his father pass the deed;
Being persuaded to it by this thought, sir,
That the unnaturalness, first of the act,
And then his father's oft disclaiming him,
(Which I did mean to help on) would sure enrage him
To do some violence upon his parent,
On which the law should take sufficient hold,
And you be stated in a double hope:
Truth be my comfort, and my conscience,
My only aim was to dig you a fortune
Out of these two old rotten sepulchres—
Volt. I cry thee mercy, Mosca.
Mos. Worth your patience,
And your great merit, sir. And see the change!
Volt. Why? what success?
Mos. Most hapless! you must help, sir.
Whilst we expected th' old raven, in comes
Corvino's wife, sent hither by her husband—
Volt. What, with a present?
Mos. No, sir, on visitation:
(I'll tell you how anon) and, staying long,
The youth he grows impatient, rushes forth,
Seizeth the lady, wounds me, makes her swear
(Or he would murder her, that was his vow)
T' affirm my patron to have done her rape:
Which, how unlike it is, you see! and, hence,
With that pretext, he's gone t' accuse his father,
Defame my patron, defeat you—
Volt. Where's her husband?
Let him be sent for strait.
Mos. Sir, I'll go fetch him.
Volt. Bring him to the Scrutineo.
Mos. Sir, I will.
Volt. This must be stopt.
Mos. O, you do nobly, sir.
Alas, 'twas labour'd all, sir, for your good;
Nor was there want of counsel in the plot:
But fortune can, at any time, o'erthrow
The projects of a hundred learned clerks, sir.
Corb. What's that?
Volt. Will't please you, sir, to go along?
Mos. Patron, go on, and pray for our success.
Volp. Need makes devotion: Heav'n your labour bless! [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

POLITIC *and* PEREGRINE.

Pol. I told you, sir, it was a plot: You see
What observation is. You mention'd me,
For some instructions: I will tell you, sir,
Since we are met here in this heighth of Venice
Some few particulars I have set down,
Only for this meridian; fit to be known
Of your crude traveller, and they are these.
I will not touch, sir, at your phrase, or clothes,
For they are old.
Per. Sir, I have better.
Pol. Pardon; I meant, as they are themes.
Per. O, sir, proceed:
I'll slander you no more of wit, good sir.
Pol. First, for your garb, it must be grave and serious;
Very reserv'd, and lockt; not tell a secret,
On any terms, not to your father; scarce
A fable, but with caution; make sure choice
Both of your company and discourse; beware,
You never speak a truth—
Per. How!
Pol. Not to strangers,
For those be they you must converse with most;
Others I would not know, sir, but at distance,
So as I still might be a saver in 'em:
You shall have tricks else past upon you hourly.
And then, for your religion, profess none;
But wonder at the diversity of all;
And, for your part, protest, were there no other
But simply the laws o' th' land, you could content you:
Nich. Machiavel, and monsieur Bodine, both
Were of this mind. Then, must you learn the use
And handling of your silver fork, at meals:
The metal of your glass; (these are main matters
With your Italian) and to know the hour,
When you must eat your melons, and your figs.
Per. Is that a point of state too?
Pol. Here it is.
For your Venetian, if he see a man
Preposterous in the least, he has him straight;
He has; he strips him. I'll acquaint you, sir.
I now have liv'd here ('tis some fourteen months)
Within the first week of landing here,
All took me for a citizen of Venice,
I knew the forms so well——
Per. And nothing else.
Pol. I had read Contarene, took me a house,
Dealt with my Jews, to furnish it with moveables—
Well, if I could but find one man, one man,
To mine own heart, whom I durst trust, I would—
Per. What? what, sir?
Pol. Make him rich; make him a fortune;
He should not think again. I would command it.
Per. As how?
Pol. With certain projects, that I have:
Which I may not discover.
Per. If I had
But one to wager with, I would lay odds, now,
He tells me instantly.
Pol. One is, (and that
I care not greatly who knows,) to serve the state
Of Venice with red herrings, for three years,
And at a certain rate, from Rotterdam,
Where I have correspondence. There's a letter,
Sent me from one o' th' States, and to that purpose;
He cannot write his name, but that's his mark.
Per. He is a chandler?
Pol. No, a cheesemonger.
There are some others too, with whom I treat,
About the same negociation;
And, I will undertake it: For, 'tis thus,
I'll do't with ease, I've cast it all. Your hoigh
Carries but three men in her, and a boy:
And she shall make me three returns a year:
So, if there come but one of three, I save,
If two, I can defalk. But, this is now,
If my main project fail.
Per. Then you have others?
Pol. I should be loth to draw the subtle air
Of such a place, without my thousand aims.
I'll not dissemble, sir, where'er I come,
I love to be considerative; and 'tis true,
I have, at my free hours, thought upon
Some certain goods, unto the state of Venice,
Which I do call my cautions; and, sir, which
I mean (in hope of pension) to propound
To the great council, then unto the forty,
So to the ten. My means are made already—
Per. By whom?
Pol. Sir, one, that, though his place be obscure,
Yet he can sway, and they will hear him. He's
A commandadore.
Per. What, a common serjeant?
Pol. Sir, such as they are, put it in their mouths,
What they should say, sometimes; as well as greater.
I think I have my notes to shew you——
Per. Good, sir.
Pol. But you shall swear unto me, on your gentry,
Not to anticipate——
Per. Ay, sir?
Pol. Nor reveal
A circumstance—My paper is not with me.
Per. O, but you can remember, sir.
Pol. My first is,
Concerning tinder-boxes. You must know,
No family is here without its box;
Now, sir, it being so portable a thing,
Put case, that you or I were ill affected
Unto the state, sir; with it in our pockets,

Might not I go into the arsenal;
Or you; come out again; and none the wiser?
Per. Except yourself, sir.
Pol. Go to, then. I, therefore,
Advertise the state, how fit it were,
That none but such as we known patriots,
Sound lovers of their country, should be suffer'd
T' enjoy them in their houses: and, even those,
Seal'd at some office, and at such a bigness,
As might not lurk in pockets.
Per. Admirable!
Pol. My next is, how t' enquire, and be resolv'd,
By present demonstration, whether a ship
Newly arriv'd from Soria, or from
Any suspected part of all the Levant,
Be guilty of the plague: And, where they use
To lie out forty, fifty days, sometimes,
About the lazaretto, for their trial;
I'll save that charge, and loss unto the merchant,
And, in an hour, clear the doubt.
Per. Indeed, sir?
Pol. Or——I will lose my labour.
Per. 'My faith, that's much.
Pol. Nay, sir, conceive me. 'Twill cost me, in onions,
Some thirty livres——
Per. Which is one pound sterling.
Pol. Besides my water-works: for this I do, sir.
First, I bring in your ship, 'twixt two brick-walls;
(But those the state shall venture) on the one
I strain me a fair tarpaulin; and, in that,
I stick my onions, cut in halves; the other
Is full of loop-holes, out at which I thrust
The noses of my bellows; and, those bellows
I keep, with water-works, in perpetual motion,
(Which is the easiest matter of a hundred.)
Now, sir, your onion, which doth naturally
Attract th' infection, and your bellows blowing
The air upon him, will shew (instantly)
By his chang'd colour, if there be contagion,
Or else, remain as fair, as at the first.
Now 'tis known, 'tis nothing.
Per. You are right, sir.
Pol. I would I had my note.
Per. 'Faith, so would I:
But, you ha' done well, for once, sir.
Pol. Were I false,
Or would be made so, I could shew you reasons,
How I could sell this state, now, to the Turk;
Spite of their galleys, or their——
Per. Pray you, sir Pol.
Pol. I have 'em not about me.
Per. That I fear'd.
They're there, sir?
Pol. No, this is my diary,
Wherein I note my actions of the day.
Per. 'Pray you, let's see, sir. What is here? Notandum,
A rat had gnawn my spur-leathers; notwithstanding,
I put on new, and did go forth: But, first,
I threw three beans over the threshold. Item,
I went, and bought two tooth-picks, whereof one
I burst immediately, in a discourse
With a Dutch merchant, 'bout Ragion Delstato.
From him I went, and paid a moccinigo,
For piecing my silk stockings; by the way,
I cheapen'd sprats: and, at St Mark's, I urin'd.
'Faith, these are politic notes!
Pol. Sir, I do slip
No action of my life, thus, but I quote it.
Per. Believe me it is wise!
Pol. Nay, sir, read forth.

SCENE II.

Lady, NANO, *Women*, POLITIC, *and* PEREGRINE.

Lady. Where should this loose knight be, trow? sure, he's hous'd.
Nano. Why, then he's fast.
Lady. Ay, he plays both, with me:
I pray you, stay. This heat will do more harm
To my complexion, than his heart is worth.
(I do not care to hinder, but to take him:)
How it comes off!
Wom. My master's yonder.
Lady. Where?
Wom. With a young gentleman.
Lady. That same's the party!
In man's apparel. 'Pray you, sir, jog my knight:
I will be tender to his reputation,
However he demerit.
Pol. My lady!
Per. Where?
Pol. 'Tis she indeed, sir, you shall know her. She is,
Were she not mine, a lady of that merit,
For fashion, and behaviour; and, for beauty,
I durst compare——
Per. It seems you are not jealous,
That dare commend her.
Pol. Nay, and for discourse——
Per. Being your wife, she cannot miss that.
Pol. Madam,
Here is a gentleman, 'pray you use him fairly,
He seems a youth, but he is——
Lady. None?
Pol. Yes, one
Has put his face, as soon, into the world——
Lady. You mean, as early? but to-day?
Pol. How's this!
Lady. Why in this habit, sir? You apprehend me.
Well, Master Would-be, this doth not become you;
I had thought the odour, sir, of your good name,
Had been more precious to you, that you would not
Have done this dire massacre on your honour;
One of your gravity, and rank, besides!
But knights, I see, care little for the oath
They make to ladies; chiefly, their own ladies.
Pol. Now, by my spurs, (the symbol of my knighthood)——
Per. Lord! how his brain is humbled for an oath.
Pol. I reach you not.
Lady. Right, sir, your polity

May bear it through, thus. Sir, a word with you.
I would be loath to contest publicly
With any gentlewoman; or to seem
Froward, or violent (as the courtier says)
It comes too near rusticity, in a lady,
Which I would shun, by all means: and, however
I may deserve from Master Would-be, yet,
T'have one fair gentlewoman, thus, be made
Th' unkind instrument to wrong another,
And one she knows not, ay, and to persevere;
In my poor judgment, is not warranted
From being a solecism in our sex,
If not in manners.
Per. How is this!
Pol. Sweet madam, come nearer to your aim.
Lady. Marry, and I will, sir,
Since you provoke me with your impudence,
And laughter of your land-syren, here,
Your Sporus, your hermaphrodite——
Per. What's here?
Poetic fury, and historic storms!
Pol. The gentleman, believe it, is of worth,
And of our nation.
Lady. Ay, your White-Friars' nation.
Come, I blush for you, Master Would-be, I;
And am ashamed, you should ha' no more forehead,
Than, thus, to be the patron, or St George,
To a lewd harlot, a base fricatrice,
A female devil, in a male outside.
Pol. Nay, an' you be such a one, I must bid adieu
To your delights. The case appears too liquid. [*Exit.*
Lady. Ay, you may carry't clear, with your state face;
But, for your carnival concupiscence,
Who here is fled for liberty of conscience,
From furious persecution of the marshal,
Her will I disciple.
Per. This is fine, i'faith!
And do you use this often? is this part
Of your wit's exercise, 'gainst you have occasion?
Madam——
Lady. Go to, sir.
Per. Do you hear me, lady?
Why, if your knight have set you to beg shirts,
Or to invite me home, you might have done it
A nearer way, by far.
Lady. This cannot work you out of my snare.
Per. Why, am I in it, then?
Indeed, your husband told me, you were fair,
And so you are; only your nose inclines
(That side, that's next the sun) to the queen-apple.
Lady. This cannot be endur'd by any patience.

SCENE III.

MOSCA, LADY, *and* PEREGRINE.

Mos. What's the matter, madam?
Lady. If the senate
Right not my quest in this, I will protest 'em,
To all the world, no aristocracy.
Mos. What is the injury, lady?
Lady. Why, the callet
You told me of, here I have ta'en disguis'd.
Mos. Who? this? what means your ladyship? the creature
I mentioned to you, is apprehended, now,
Before the senate; you shall see her——
Lady. Where?
Mos. I'll bring you to her. This young gentleman,
I saw him land, this morning, at the port.
Lady. Is't possible! how has my judgment wandered!
Sir, I must, blushing, say to you, I have erred;
And plead your pardon.
Per. What! more changes yet?
Lady. I hope you ha' not the malice to remember
A gentlewoman's passion. If you stay
In Venice, here, please you to use me, sir——
Mos. Will you go, madam?
Lady. Pray you, sir, use me. In faith,
The more you see me, the more I shall conceive
You have forgot our quarrel.
Per. This is rare!
Sir Politic Would-be? No, sir Politic Bawd!
To bring me thus acquainted with his wife!
Well, wise sir Pol. since you have practis'd thus
Upon my freshman-ship, I'll try your salt-head,
What proof it is against a counter-plot.

SCENE IV.

VOLTORE, CORBACCIO, CORVINO, *and* MOSCA.

Volt. Well, now you know the carriage of the business,
Your constancy is all that is required
Unto the safety of it.
Mos. Is the lie
Safely conveyed amongst us? Is that sure?
Knows every man his burden?
Corv. Yes.
Mos. Then shrink not.
Corv. But knows the advocate the truth?
Mos. O, sir, by no means. I devised a formal tale,
That salved your reputation. But, be valiant, sir.
Corv. I fear no one, but him; that this his pleading
Should make him stand for a co-heir——
Mos. Co-halter!
Hang him; we will but use his tongue, his noise,
As we do croakers, here.
Corv. Ay, what shall he do?
Mos. When we ha' done, you mean?
Corv. Yes.
Mos. Why, we'll think;
Sell him for mummia, he's half dust already.
Do not you smile, to see this buffalo, [*To* VOLT.
How he doth sport it with his head?—I should,
If all were well, and passed.—Sir, only you [*To* COR.
Are he, that shall enjoy the crop of all,
And these not know for whom they toil.
Corb. Ay, peace.

Mos. But you shall eat it: much! [*To* CORV.]
Worshipful sir, [*To* VOLT.
Mercury sit upon your thundering tongue,
Or the French Hercules, and make your language
As conquering as his club, to beat along,
(As with a tempest) flat, our adversaries;
But, much more, yours, sir.
Volt. Here they come, ha' done.
Mos. I have another witness, if you need, sir,
I can produce.
Volt. Who is it?
Mos. Sir, I have her.

SCENE V.

Four Avocatori, BONARIO, CELIA, VOLTORE, CORBACCIO, CORVINO, MOSCA, NOTARIO, *and* COMMENDADORI.

1 *Avoc.* The like of this the senate never heard of.
2 *Avoc.* 'Twill come most strange to them, when we report it.
4 *Avoc.* The gentlewoman has been ever held
Of unreproved name.
3 *Avoc.* So, the young man.
4 *Avoc.* The more unnatural part, that of his father.
2 *Avoc.* More of the husband.
1 *Avoc.* I not know to give
His act a name, it is so monstrous!
4 *Avoc.* But the impostor, he is a thing created
T' exceed example!
1 *Avoc.* And all after-times.
2 *Avoc.* I never heard a true voluptuary
Described, but him.
3 *Avoc.* Appear yet those were cited?
Not. All but the old magnifico, Volpone.
1 *Avoc.* Why is not he here?
Mos. Please your fatherhoods,
Here is his advocate. Himself's so weak,
So feeble——
4 *Avoc.* What are you?
Bon. His parasite,
His knave, his pander: I beseech the court,
He may be forced to come, that your grave eyes
May bear strong witness of his strange impostures.
Volt. Upon my faith and credit with your virtues,
He is not able to endure the air.
2 *Avoc.* Bring him, however.
3 *Avoc.* We will see him.
4 *Avoc.* Fetch him.
Volt. Your fatherhoods' fit pleasure be obeyed.
Be sure, the sight will rather move your pities,
Than indignation. May it please the court,
In the meantime, he may be heard in me:
I know this place most void of prejudice,
And therefore crave it, since we have no reason
To fear our truth should hurt our cause.
3 *Avoc.* Speak free.
Volt. Then know, most honoured fathers, I must now
Discover, to your strangely abused ears,
The most prodigious, and most frontless piece
Of solid impudence and treachery,
That ever vicious nature yet brought forth
To shame the state of Venice. This lewd woman
(That wants no artificial looks, or tears,
To help the vizor she has now put on)
Hath long been known a close adulteress,
To that lascivious youth, there; not suspected,
I say, but known, and taken in the act
With him; and by this man, the easy husband,
Pardoned: whose timeless bounty makes him, now,
Stand here, the most unhappy, innocent person,
That ever man's own goodness made accused.
For these, not knowing how to owe a gift
Of that dear grace, but with their shame, being placed
So 'bove all powers of their gratitude,
Began to hate the benefit; and, in place
Of thanks, devise to extirpe the memory
Of such an act. Wherein, I pray your fatherhoods
T' observe the malice, yea, the rage of creatures
Discovered in their evils; and what heart
Such take, even from their crimes. But that, anon,
Will more appear. This gentleman, the father,
Hearing of this foul act, with many others,
Which daily struck at his too tender ears,
And, grieved in nothing more, than that he could not
Preserve himself a parent, (his son's ills
Growing to that strange flood) at last decreed
To disinherit him.
1 *Avoc.* These be strange turns!
2 *Avoc.* The young man's fame was ever fair and honest.
Volt. So much more full of danger is his vice,
That can beguile so, under shade of virtue.
But, as I said, my honoured sirs, his father
Having this settled purpose, (by what means
To him betrayed, we know not) and this day
Appointed for the deed; that parricide,
(I cannot stile him better) by confederacy,
Preparing this his paramour to be there,
Entered Volpone's house, (who was the man,
Your fatherhoods must understand, designed
For the inheritance) there, sought his father:
But with what purpose sought he him, my lords?
(I tremble to pronounce it, that a son
Unto a father, and to such a father,
Should have so foul, felonious intent)
It was, to murder him. When, being prevented
By his more happy absence, what then did he?
Not check his wicked thoughts; no, now new deeds:
(Mischief doth ever end where it begins)
An act of horror, fathers! he dragged forth
The aged gentleman that had there lain, bed-rid,
Three years and more, out of his innocent couch,
Naked, upon the floor, there left him; wounded
His servant in the face; and, with this strumpet,
The stale to his forged practice, who was glad
To be so active, (I shall here desire
Your fatherhoods to note but my collections
As most remarkable) thought, at once, to stop
His father's ends; discredit his free choice,

In the old gentleman; redeem themselves,
By laying infamy upon this man,
To whom, with blushing, they should owe their lives.
1 *Avoc.* What proofs have we of this?
Bon. Most honoured fathers,
I humbly crave, there be no credit given
To this man's mercenary tongue.
2 *Avoc.* Forbear.
Bon. His soul moves in his fee.
3 *Avoc.* O, sir.
Bon. This fellow,
For six sous more, would plead against his Maker.
1 *Avoc.* You do forget yourself.
Volt. Nay, nay, grave fathers,
Let him have scope: can any man imagine
That he will spare his accuser, that would not
Have spared his parent?
1 *Avoc.* Well, produce your proofs.
Cel. I would I could forget I were a creature!
Volt. Signior Corbaccio.
4 *Avoc.* What is he?
Volt. The father.
2 *Avoc.* Has he had an oath?
Notar. Yes.
Corb. What must I do now?
Notar. Your testimony's craved.
Corb. Speak to the knave?
I'll ha' my mouth, first, stopped with earth; my heart
Abhors his knowledge: I disclaim in him.
1 *Avoc.* But for what cause?
Corb. The mere portent of nature.
He is an utter stranger to my loins.
Bon. Have they made you to this!
Corb. I will not hear thee,
Monster of men, swine, goat, wolf, parricide!
Speak not, thou viper.
Bon. Sir, I will sit down,
And rather wish my innocence should suffer,
Than I resist the authority of a father.
Volt. Signior Corvino.
2 *Avoc.* This is strange!
1 *Avoc.* Who's this?
Notar. The husband.
4 *Avoc.* Is he sworn?
Notar. He is.
3 *Avoc.* Speak then.
Corv. This woman, please your fatherhoods, is a whore,
Of most hot exercise, more than a partridge,
Upon record——
1 *Avoc.* No more.
Corv. Neighs, like a jennet.
Notar. Preserve the honour of the court.
Corv. I shall,
And modesty of your most reverend ears.
And yet, I hope that I may say, these eyes
Have seen her glued unto that piece of cedar;
That fine well-timbered gallant: and that, here,
The letters may be read, thorough the horn,
That make the story perfect.
Mos. Excellent! sir.
Corv. There is no shame in this, now, is there?
Mos. None.
Corv. Or if I said, I hoped that she were onward
To her damnation, if there be a hell
Greater than whore and woman; a good catholic
May make the doubt.
3 *Avoc.* His grief hath made him frantic.
1 *Avoc.* Remove him hence.
2 *Avoc.* Look to the woman. [CEL. *swoons.*
Corv. Rare! prettily feigned! again!
4 *Avoc.* Stand from about her.
1 *Avoc.* Give her the air.
3 *Avoc.* What can you say?
Mos. My wound,
May't please your wisdoms, speaks for me, received
In aid of my good patron, when he missed
His sought-for father, when that well-taught dame
Had her cue given her, to cry out a rape.
Bon. O, most laid impudence! Fathers——
3 *Avoc.* Sir, be silent,
You had your hearing free, so must they theirs.
2 *Avoc.* I do begin to doubt th' imposture here.
4 *Avoc.* This woman has too many moods.
Volt. Grave fathers,
She is a creature of a most professed
And prostituted lewdness.
Corv. Most impetuous!
Unsatisfied, grave fathers!
Volt. May her feignings
Not take your wisdoms; but this day she baited
A stranger, a grave knight, with her loose eyes,
And more lascivious kisses. This man saw 'em
Together on the water, in a gondola.
Mos. Here's the lady herself that saw 'em too,
Without, who then had in the open streets
Pursued them, but for saving her knight's honour.
1 *Avoc.* Produce that lady.
2 *Avoc.* Let her come.
4 *Avoc.* These things,
They strike with wonder!
3 *Avoc.* I am turned a stone!

SCENE VI.

MOSCA, *Lady*, *Avocatori*, &c.

Mos. Be resolute, madam.
Lady. Ay, this same is she.
Out, thou cameleon harlot! now thine eyes
Vie tears with the hyæna: Dar'st thou look
Upon my wronged face? I cry your pardons.
I fear I have (forgettingly) transgressed
Against the dignity of the court——
2 *Avoc.* No, madam.
Lady. And been exorbitant——
4 *Avoc.* You have not, lady.
These proofs are strong.
Lady. Surely, I had no purpose
To scandalize your honours, or my sex's.
3 *Avoc.* We do believe it.
Lady. Surely you may believe it.
2 *Avoc.* Madam, we do.
Lady. Indeed, you may; my breeding
Is not so coarse——
4 *Avoc.* We know it.
Lady. To offend with pertinacy——
3 *Avoc.* Lady.

Lady. Such a presence:
No, surely.
Avoc. We will think it.
Lady. You may think it.
1 *Avoc.* Let her o'ercome. What witnesses have you,
To make good your report?
Bon. Our consciences.
Cel. And Heaven, that never fails the innocent.
4 *Avoc.* These are no testimonies.
Bon. Not in your courts,
Where multitude and clamours overcome.
Avoc. Nay, then do you wax insolent.
Volt. Here, here,
The testimony comes, that will convince,
[VOLPONE *is brought in as impotent.*
And put to utter dumbness their bold tongues.
See here, grave fathers, here's the ravisher,
The rider on men's wives, the great impostor,
The grand voluptuary! Do you not think,
These limbs should affect venery? or these eyes
Covet a concubine? 'Pray you mark these hands,
Are they not fit to stroke a lady's breasts?
Perhaps, he doth dissemble!
Bon. So he does.
Volt. Would you ha' him tortur'd?
Bon. I would have him proved.
Volt. Best try him, then, with goads or burning irons;
Put him to the strappado: I have heard,
The rack hath cured the gout; 'faith, give it him,
And help him of a malady, be courteous.
I'll undertake, before these honour'd fathers,
He shall have, yet, as many left diseases,
As she has known adulterers, or thou strumpets.
O, my most equal hearers, if these deeds,
Acts of this bold and most exorbitant strain,
May pass with sufferance, what one citizen,
But owes the forfeit of his life, yea fame,
To him that dares traduce him? Which of you
Are safe, my honour'd fathers? I would ask
(With leave of your grave fatherhoods) if their plot
Have any face, or colour, like to truth?
Or if, unto the dullest nostril here,
It smell not rank, and most abhorred slander?
I crave your care of this good gentleman,
Whose life is much endanger'd by their fable;
And, as for them, I will conclude with this,
That vicious persons when they are hot, and flesh'd
In impious acts, their constancy abounds:
Damn'd deeds are done with greatest confidence.
1 *Avoc.* Take 'em to custody, and sever them.
[*Exeunt* BONARIO *and* CELIA.
2 *Avoc.* 'Tis pity two such prodigies should live.
1 *Avoc.* Let the old gentleman be return'd with care:
I'm sorry our credulity wrong'd him.
[VOLPONE *is carried out.*
4 *Avoc.* These are two creatures!
3 *Avoc.* I have an earthquake in me!
2 *Avoc.* Their shame (even in their cradles) fled their faces.
4 *Avoc.* You've done a worthy service to the state, sir,
In their discovery.
1 *Avo.* You shall hear, ere night,
What punishment the court decrees upon 'em.
[*Exeunt four Avocatori.*
Volt. We thank your fatherhoods.—How like you it?
Mos. Rare.
I'd ha' your tongue, sir, tipt with gold, for this;
I'd ha' you be the heir to the whole city.
The earth I'd have want men, e'er you want living:
They're bound to erect your statue in St Mark's.
Signior Corvino, I would have you go,
And shew yourself, that you have conquer'd.
Corv. Yes.
Mos. It was much better that you should profess
Yourself a cuckold, thus, than that the other
Should have been prov'd.
Corv. Nay, I consider'd that:
Now it is her fault.
Mos. Then it had been yours.
Corv. True. I do doubt this advocate still.
Mos. I'faith,
You need not, I dare ease you of that care.
Corv. I trust thee, Mosca.
Mos. As your own soul, sir.
Corb. Mosca.
Mos. Now for your business, sir.
Corb. How! ha' you business?
Mos. Yes, your's, sir.
Corb. O, none else?
Mos. None else, not I.
Corb. Be careful then.
Mos. Rest you with both your eyes, sir.
Corb. Dispatch it.
Mos. Instantly.
Corb. And look, that all,
Whatever, be put in, jewels, plate, moneys,
Household-stuff, bedding, curtains.
Mos. Curtain-rings, sir.
Only, the advocate's fee must be deducted.
Corb. I'll pay him, now: You'll be too prodigal.
Mos. Sir, I must tender it.
Corb. Two cecchines is well?
Mos. No, six, sir.
Corb. 'Tis too much.
Mos. He talk'd a great while;
You must consider that, sir.
Corb. Well, there's three——
Mos. I'll give it him.
Corb. Do so, and there's for thee.
Mos. Bountiful bones! What horrid strange offence
Did he commit 'gainst nature, in his youth,
Worthy this age? You see, sir, how I work
Unto your ends; take you no notice.
Volt. No, I'll leave you.
Mos. All is yours;—the devil, and all,
Good advocate. Madam, I'll bring you home.
Lady. No, I'll go see your patron.
Mos. That you shall not:
I'll tell you why. My purpose is, to urge

My patron to reform his will; and, for
The zeal you have shewn to-day, whereas before
You were but third, or fourth, you shall be now
Put in the first; which would appear as begg'd,
If you were present. Therefore——
Lady. You shall sway me. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

VOLPONE.

Volp. Well, I am here; and all this brunt is past:
I ne'er was in dislike with my disguise,
'Till this fled moment; here 'twas good, in private;
But, in your public, *cave*, whilst I breathe.
'Fore God, my left leg 'gan to have the cramp;
And I apprehended, strait, some power had struck me
With a dead palsy: Well, I must be merry
And shake it off. A many of these fears
Would put me into some villanous disease,
Should they come thick upon me: I'll prevent 'em.
Give me a bowl of lusty wine, to fright
This humour from my heart; (hum, hum, hum,)
[*He drinks.*
'Tis almost gone already: I shall conquer.
Any device, now, of rare, ingenious knavery,
That would possess me with a violent laughter,
Would make me up, again! So, so, so, so.
[*Drinks again.*
This heat is life; 'tis blood, by this time: Mosca!

SCENE II.

MOSCA, VOLPONE.

Mos. How now, sir? does the day look clear again?
Are we recover'd? And wrought out of error,
Into our way? To see our path before us?
Is our trade free once more?
Volp. Exquisite Mosca!
Mos. Was it not carried learnedly?
Volp. And stoutly.
Good wits are greatest in extremities.
Mos. It were a folly, beyond thought, to trust
Any grand act unto a cowardly spirit:
You are not taken with it enough, methinks?
Volp. O more than if I had enjoy'd the wench.
The pleasure of all womankind's not like it.
Mos. Why, now you speak, sir. We must here be fix'd;
Here we must rest; this is our master-piece:
We cannot think to go beyond this.
Volp. True,
Thou hast play'd this prize, my precious Mosca.
Mos. Nay, sir,
To gull the court——
Volp. And quite divert the torrent,
Upon the innocent.
Mos. Yes, and to make
So rare a music out of discords——
Volp. Right.
That, yet, to me's the strangest! How th' hast born it!
That these, being so divided 'mongst themselves,
Should not scent somewhat, or in me or thee,
Or doubt their own side.
Mos. True, they will not see't.
Too much light blinds 'em, I think. Each of 'em
Is so possessed, and stuff'd with his own hopes,
That any thing unto the contrary,
Never so true, or never so apparent,
Never so palpable, they will resist it!——
Volp. Like a temptation of the devil.
Mos. Right, sir.
Merchants may talk of trade, and your great signiors
Of land that yields well; but if Italy
Have any glebe more fruitful than these fellows,
I am deceiv'd. Did not your advocate rare?
Volp. O, (my most honour'd fathers, my grave fathers,
Under correction of your fatherhoods,
What face of truth is here? If these strange deeds
May pass, most honour'd fathers——) I had much ado
To forbear laughing.
Mos. 'T seem'd to me you sweat, sir.
Volp. In troth, I did a little.
Mos. But confess, sir,
Were you not daunted?
Volp. In good faith I was
A little in a mist, but not dejected:
Never, but still myself.
Mos. I think it, sir.
Now, so truth help me, I must needs say this, sir,
And, out of conscience, for your advocate:
He has taken pains in faith, sir, and deserved
(In my poor judgment, I speak it, under favour,
Not to contrary you, sir,) very richly
Well——to be cozen'd.
Volp. Troth, and I think so too,
By that I heard him, in the latter end.
Mos. O, but before, sir; had you heard him, first,
Draw it to certain heads, then aggravate,
Then use his vehement figures——I look'd still,
When he would shift a shirt; and doing this
Out of pure love, no hope of gain——
Volp. 'Tis right.
I cannot answer him, Mosca, as I would,
Not yet; but for thy sake, at thy entreaty,

I will begin, ev'n now, to vex 'em all:
This very instant.
Mos. Good, sir.
Volp. Call the dwarf, and eunuch, forth.
Mos. Castrone, Nano.

Enter CASTRONE *and* NANO.

Nan. Here.
Volp. Shall we have a jigg now?
Mos. What you please, sir.
Volp. Go,
Strait give out, about the streets, you two,
That I am dead; do it with constancy,
Sadly; do you hear? impute it to the grief
Of this late slander.
Mos. What do you mean, sir?
Volp. O,
I shall have instantly my vulture, crow,
Ravens, come flying hither, on the news,
To peck for carrion; my she-wolf, and all
Greedy, and full of expectation——
Mos. And then to have it ravish'd from their mouths?
Volp. 'Tis true, I will ha' thee put on a gown,
And take upon thee as thou wert mine heir;
Shew 'em a will; open that chest, and reach
Forth one of those that has the blanks. I'll strait
Put in thy name.
Mos. It will be rare, sir.
Volp. Ay,
When they ev'n gape, and find themselves deluded——
Mos. Yes.
Volp. And thou use them scurvily. Dispatch,
Get on thy gown.
Mos. But what, sir, if they ask
After the body?
Volp. Say it was corrupted.
Mos. I'll say it stunk, sir; and was fain to have it
Coffin'd up instantly, and sent away.
Volp. Any thing, what thou wilt. Hold, here's my will;
Get thee a cap, a count-book, pen and ink,
Papers afore thee; sit, as thou wert taking
An inventory of parcels: I'll get up
Behind the curtain, on a stool, and hearken;
Sometimes peep over; see how they do look;
With what degrees their blood doth leave their faces!
O, 'twill afford me a real meal of laughter.
Mos. Your advocate will turn stark dull upon it.
Volp. It will take off his oratory's edge.
Mos. But your Clarissimo, old round-back, he
Will crump you, like a hog-louse, with the touch.
Volp. And what Corvino?
Mos. O, sir, look for him,
To-morrow morning, with a rope and a dagger,
To visit all the streets; he must run mad.
My Lady, too, that came into the court,
To bear false witness for your worship——
Volp. Yes,
And kiss me 'fore the fathers; when my face
Flow'd all with oils.
Mos. And sweat, sir. Why, your gold
Is such another med'cine, it dries up
All those offensive savours! It transforms
The most deformed, and restores 'em lovely,
As 'twere the strange poetical girdle. Jove
Could not invent t'himself a shroud more subtle,
To pass Acrisius's guards. It is the thing
Makes all the world, her grace, her youth, her beauty.
Volp. I think she loves me.
Mos. Who? the lady, sir? She's jealous of you.
Volp. Do'st thou say so?
Mos. Hark, there's some already.
Volp. Look.
Mos. It is the vulture:
He has the quickest scent.
Volp. I'll to my place, thou to thy posture.
Mos. I am set.
Volp. But, Mosca,
Play the artificer now, torture 'em rarely.

SCENE III.

VOLTORE, MOSCA, *and* VOLPONE.

Volt. How now, my Mosca?
Mos. Turkey carpets, nine——
Volt. Taking an inventory! that is well.
Mos. Two suits of bedding, tissue——
Volt. Where's the will? let me read that the while.

Enter CORBACCIO.

Corb. So, set me down: and get you home.
Volt. Is he come now, to trouble us?
Mos. Of cloth of gold, two more——
Corb. Is it done, Mosca?
Mos. Of several velvets, eight——
Volt. I like his care.
Corb. Dost thou not hear?

Enter CORVINO.

Corv. Ha! is the hour come, Mosca?
Volp. Ay, now they muster.
Corv. What does the advocate here?
[VOLP. *peeps from behind a traverse.*
Or this Corbaccio?
Corb. What do these here?

Enter Lady.

Lady. Mosca! is his thread spun?
Mos. Eight chests of linen——
Volp. O, my fine dame Would-be too!
Corv. Mosca, the will,
That I may shew it these, and rid 'em hence.
Mos. Six chests of diaper, four of damask—
There.
Corb. Is that the will?
Mos. Down-beds and bolsters—
Volp. Rare!
Be busy still. Now they begin to flutter:
They never think of me. Look, see, see, see!
How their swift eyes run over the long deed,
Unto the name, and to the legacies,
What is bequeath'd them there——
Mos. Ten suits of hangings—

Volp. Ay, i' their garters, Mosca. Now their hopes
Are at the gasp.
Volt. Mosca the heir!
Corb. What's that?
Volp. My advocate is dumb! look to my merchant!
He has heard of some strange storm, a ship is lost,
He faints: My lady will swoon. Old glazen eyes,
He hath not reach'd his despair yet.
Corb. All these are out of hope: I'm, sure, the man.
Corv. But, Mosca——
Mos. Two cabinets——
Corv. Is this in earnest?
Mos. One of ebony——
Corv. Or do you but delude me——
Mos. The other, mother of pearl—I am very busy.
Good faith, it is a fortune thrown upon me—
Item, one salt of agate——not my seeking.
Lady. Do you hear, sir?
Mos. A perfum'd box——prithee forbear,
You see I am troubled——made of an onyx—
Lady. How!
Mos. To-morrow, or next day, I shall be at leisure
To talk with you all.
Corv. Is this my large hopes issue?
Lady. Sir, I must have a fairer answer.
Mos. Madam?
Marry, and shall: 'Pray you, fairly, quit my house.
Nay, raise no tempest with your looks; but, hark you:
Remember what your ladyship offered me,
To put you in an heir; go to, think on't;
And what you said, e'en your best madams did
For maintenance, and why not you? enough.
Go home, and use the poor Sir Pol. your knight, well;
For fear I tell some riddles: Go, be melancholic. [*Exit.*
Volp. O, my fine devil!
Corv. Mosca, 'pray you a word.
Mos. Lord! will not you take your dispatch hence yet?
Methinks, of all, you should have been th' example.
Why should you stay here? with what thought? what promise?
Hear you, do not you know, I know you an ass?
And that you would most fain have been a wittol,
If fortune would have let you? that you are
A declar'd cuckold, on good terms? this pearl,
You'll say, was your's? right, this diamond?
I'll not deny't, but thank you. Much here else?
It may be so. Why, think that these good works
May help to hide your bad: I'll not betray you
Although you be but extraordinary,
And have it only in title, it sufficeth.
Go home, be melancholic too, or mad. [*Exit.*
Volp. Rare Mosca! how his villany becomes him!
Volt. Certain he doth delude all these for me.
Corb. Mosca, the heir?
Volp. O, his four eyes have found it!
Corb. I'm cozen'd, cheated, by a parasite slave; Harlot, thou'st gull'd me.
Mos. Yes, sir. Stop your mouth,
Or I shall draw the only tooth is left.
Are not you he, that filthy covetous wretch,
With the three legs, that here, in hope of prey,
Have, any time this three years, snuft about,
With your most grov'ling nose; and would have hir'd
Me to the pois'ning of my patron, sir!
Are not you he that have, to-day in court,
Profess'd the disinheriting of your son?
Perjured yourself? Go home, and die, and stink:
If you but croak a syllable, all comes out:
Away and call your porters, go, go, stink. [*Exit.*
Volp. Excellent varlet!
Volt. Now, my faithful Mosca,
I find thy constancy.
Mos. Sir?
Volt. Sincere.
Mos. A table of porphyry——
I mar'le, you'll be thus troublesome.
Volt. Nay, leave off now, they are gone.
Mos. Why, who are you?
What? who did send for you? O, cry you mercy,
Reverend sir! good faith, I am griev'd for you,
That any chance of mine should thus defeat
Your, I must needs say, most deserving travels:
But, I protest, sir, it was cast upon me,
And I could, almost, wish to be without it,
But that the will o'th' dead must be observed.
Marry, my joy is, that you need it not;
You have a gift, sir, (thank your education)
Will never let you want, while there are men,
And malice, to breed causes. Would I had
But half the like, for all my fortune, sir.
If I have any suits (as I do hope,
Things being so easy and direct, I shall not)
I will make bold with your obstreperous aid,
(Conceive me) for your fee, sir. In mean time,
You, that have so much law, I know ha' the conscience
Not to be covetous of what is mine.
Good sir, I thank you for my plate; 'twill help
To set up a young man. Good faith, you look
As you were costive; best go home and purge, sir. [*Exit.*
Volp. Bid him eat lettuce well: My witty mischief,
Let me embrace thee! O, that I could now
Transform thee to a Venus—Mosca, go
Straight, take my habit of Clarissimo,
And walk the streets; be seen, torment 'em more:
We must pursue, as well as plot. Who would
Have lost this feast!
Mos. I doubt it will lose them.
Volp. O, my recovery shall recover all.
That I could now but think on some disguise
To meet 'em in, and ask 'em questions.
How I would vex 'em still at every turn!
Mos. Sir, I can fit you.

Volp. Canst thou?
Mos. Yes, I know
One o'th' commandatori, sir, so like you;
Him will I straight make drunk, and bring you his habit.
Volp. A rare disguise, and answering thy brain!
O, I will be a sharp disease unto 'em.
Mos. Sir, you must look for curses——
Volp. 'Till they burst;
The fox fares ever best, when he is curst.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

PEREGRINE *and three Mercatori.*

Per. Am I enough disguis'd?
1 *Mer.* I warrant you.
Per. All my ambition is to fright him only.
2 *Mer.* If you could ship him away, 'twere excellent.
3 *Mer.* To Zant, or to Aleppo.
Per. Yes, and ha' his
Adventures put in the book of voyages,
And his gull'd story regist'red for truth.
Well, gentlemen, when I am in a while,
And that you think us warm in our discourse,
Know your approaches.
1 *Mer.* Trust it to our care.

Enter Woman.

Per. Save you, fair lady. Is sir Pol. within?
Wom. I do not know, sir.
Per. 'Pray you, say unto him,
Here is a merchant, upon earnest business,
Desires to speak with him.
Wom. I will see, sir.
Per. 'Pray you.
I see the family is all female, here.
Wom. He says, sir, he has weighty affairs of state,
That now require him whole, some other time
You may possess him.
Per. 'Pray you say again,
If those require him whole, these will exact him,
Whereof I bring him tidings.—What might be
His grave affair of state, now? how to make
Bolognian sausages, here in Venice, sparing
One o'th' ingredients.
Wom. Sir, he says, he knows
By your word, tidings, that you are no statesman,
And therefore wills you to stay.
Per. Sweet, 'pray you return him;
I have not read so many proclamations,
And studied them for words, as he has done,
But——Here he deigns to come.

Enter Sir POLITIC.

Pol. Sir, I must crave
Your courteous pardon. There hath chanc'd, to-day,
Unkind disaster 'twixt my lady and me;
And I was penning my apology
To give her satisfaction, as you come, now.
Per. Sir, I am griev'd, I bring you worse disaster;
The gentleman you met at th' port, to-day,
That told you he was newly arriv'd——
Pol. Ay, was a fugitive punk?
Per. No, sir, a spy set on you:
And he has made relation to the senate,
That you profess'd to him, to have a plot,
To sell the state of Venice to the Turk.
Pol. O me!
Per. For which warrants are sign'd by this time,
To apprehend you, and to search your study
For papers——
Pol. Alas, sir, I have none, but notes
Drawn out of play books——
Per. All the better, sir.
Pol. And some essays. What shall I do?
Per. Sir, best
Convey yourself into a sugar chest,
Or, if you would lie round, a frail were rare:
And I could send you aboard.
Pol. Sir, I but talk'd so,
For discourse sake merely.
Per. Hark, they are there.
[*They knock without.*
Pol. I am a wretch, a wretch!
Per. What will you do, sir?
Ha' ye ne'er a curran-butt to leap into?
They'll put you to the rack: you must be sudden.
Pol. Sir, I have an engine——
3 *Mer.* Sir Politic Would-be?
2 *Mer.* Where is he?
Pol. That I have thought upon, before time.
Per. What is it?
Pol. I shall ne'er endure the torture.
Marry, it is, sir, of a tortoise-shell,
Fitted for these extremities: 'Pray you, sir, help me.
Here I have a place, sir, to put back my legs,
(Please you to lay it on, sir) with this cap,
And my black gloves. I'll lie, sir, like a tortoise,
'Till they are gone.
Per. And call you this an engine?
Pol. Mine own device——Good sir, bid my wife's women
To burn my papers.
1 *Mer.* Where's he hid? [*They rush in.*
3 *Mer.* We must,
And will, sure, find him.
2 *Mer.* Which is his study?
1 *Mer.* What are you, sir?
Per. I am a merchant, that came here
To look upon this tortoise.
3 *Mer.* How?
1 *Mer.* St Mark! What beast is this?
Per. It is a fish.
2 *Mer.* Come out, here.
Per. Nay, you may strike him, sir, and tread upon him:
He'll bear a cart.
1 *Mer.* What! to run over him?
Per. Yes, sir.
3 *Mer.* Let's jump upon him.
2 *Mer.* Can he not go?
Per. He creeps, sir.

1 *Mer.* Let's see him creep.
Per. No, good sir, you will hurt him.
2 *Mer.* 'Heart, I'll see him creep; or prick his guts.
3 *Mer.* Come out, here.
Per. 'Pray you, sir, creep a little.
1 *Mer.* Forth.
2 *Mer.* Yet farther.
Per. Good sir, creep.
2 *Mer.* We'll see his legs.
[*They pull off the shell, and discover him.*
3 *Mer.* Gad's so, he has garters!
1 *Mer.* Ay, and gloves!
2 *Mer.* Is this your fearful tortoise?
Per. Now, Sir Politic, we are even;
For your next project, I shall be prepar'd:
I am sorry for the funeral of your notes, sir.
1 *Mer.* 'Twere a rare motion, to be seen in Fleet-street!
2 *Mer.* Ay, i'the term.
1 *Mer.* Or Smithfield, in the fair.
3 *Mer.* Methinks 'tis but a melancholic sight!
Per. Farewell, most politic tortoise.
Pol. Where's my lady?
Knows she of this?
Wom. I know not, sir.
Pol. Enquire.
O, I shall be the fable of all feasts;
The freight of the Gazetti; ship-boys tale;
And, which is worst, even talk for ordinaries.
Wom. My lady's come most melancholic home,
And says, sir, she will straight to sea, for physic.
Pol. And I, to shun this place and clime for ever;
Creeping, with house on back; and think it well,
To shrink my poor head in my politic shell.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

VOLPONE *and* MOSCA.—*The first in the habit of a Commandatore; the other, of a Clarissimo.*

Volp. Am I then like him?
Mos. O, sir, you are he:
No man can sever you.
Volp. Good.
Mos. But, what am I?
Volp. 'Fore Heav'n, a brave Clarissimo, thou becom'st it!
Pity thou wert not born one.
Mos. If I hold
My made one, 'twill be well.
Volp. I'll go and see
What news, first, at the court. [*Exit.*
Mos. Do so. My fox
Is out of his hole, and, e'er he shall re-enter,
I'll make him languish in his borrow'd case,
Except he come to composition with me.
Androgino, Castrone, Nano.
All. Here.
Mos. Go, recreate yourselves abroad; go, sport.
So, now I have the keys, and am possess'd.
Since he will needs be dead afore his time,
I'll bury him, or gain by him. I am his heir:
And so will keep me, 'till he share at least.
To cozen him of all, were but a cheat
Well plac'd; no man would construe it a sin:
Let his sport pay for't, this is call'd the fox-trap.

SCENE VI.

CORBACCIO, CORVINO, *and* VOLPONE.

Corb. They say the court is set.
Corv. We must maintain
Our first tale good, for both our reputations.
Corb. Why? mine's no tale: my son would there have kill'd me.
Corv. That's true, I had forgot: mine is, I am sure.
But, for your will, sir.
Corb. Ay, I'll come upon him
For that, hereafter, now his patron's dead.
Volp. Signior Corvino! and Corbaccio! Sir,
Much joy unto you.
Corv. Of what?
Volp. The sudden good
Dropp'd down upon you—
Corb. Where?
Volp. (And, none knows how)
From old Volpone, sir.
Corb. Out, arrant knave!
Volp. Let not your too much wealth, sir, make you furious.
Corb. Away, thou varlet.
Volp. Why, sir?
Corb. Dost thou mock me?
Volp. You mock the world, sir; did you not change wills?
Corb. Out, harlot.
Volp. O! belike you are the man,
Signior Corvino? 'Faith, you carry it well;
You grow not mad withal: I love your spirit.
You are not over-leaven'd with your fortune.
You should ha' some would swell, now, like a wine-fat,
With such an autumn—Did he gi' you all, sir?
Corv. Avoid, you rascal.
Volp. 'Troth, your wife has shewn
Herself a very woman; but you are well,
You need not care, you have a good estate
To bear it out, sir, better by this chance;
Except Corbaccio have a share.
Corb. Hence, varlet.
Volp. You will not be a'known, sir: Why, 'tis wise;
Thus do all gamesters, at all games, dissemble.
No man will seem to win. Here comes my vulture,
Heaving his beak up in the air, and snuffing.

SCENE VII.

VOLTORE *and* VOLPONE.

Volt. Outstript thus, by a parasite, a slave?
Would run on errands? and make legs for crums?
Well, what I'll do—
Volp. The court stays for your worship.
I e'en rejoice, sir, at your worship's happiness,
And that it fell into so learned hands

That understand the fingering—
Volt. What do you mean?
Volp. I mean to be a suitor to your worship,
For the small tenement, out of reparations;
That, at the end of your long row of houses,
By the Piscaria: It was, in Volpone's time,
Your predecessor, e'er he grew diseased,
A handsome, pretty, custom'd bawdy-house,
As any was in Venice (none dispraised)
But fell with him; his body and that house
Decay'd together.
Volt. Come, sir, leave your prating.
Volp. Why, if your worship give me but your hand,
That I may ha' the refusal; I have done.
'Tis a mere toy to you, sir; candle-rents:
As your learn'd worship knows—
Volt. What do I know?
Volp. Marry, no end of your wealth, sir; God decrease it.
Volt. Mistaken knave! what, mock'st thou my misfortune?
Volp. His blessing on your heart, sir; would 'twere more.
(Now, to my first again) at the next corner.

SCENE VIII.

CORBACCIO, CORVINO, (MOSCA *passant*,) *and* VOLPONE.

Corb. See, in our habit! see the impudent varlet!
Corv. That I could shoot mine eyes at him, like gun-stones.
Volp. But is this true, sir, of the parasite?
Corb. Again, t' afflict us? Monster!
Volp. In good faith, sir,
I'm heartily grieved, a beard of your grave length
Should be so over-reach'd. I never brook'd
That parasite's hair; methought his nose should cozen:
There still was somewhat in his look, did promise
The bane of a Clarissimo.
Corb. Knave—
Volp. Methinks
Yet you, that are so traded i'th' world,
A witty merchant, the fine bird, Corvino,
That have such mortal emblems on your name,
Should not have sung your shame, and dropt your cheese,
To let the fox laugh at your emptiness.
Corv. Sirrah, you think the privilege of the place,
And your red saucy cap, that seems (to me)
Nail'd to your jolt-head, with those two cecchines,
Can warrant your abuses; come you hither:
You shall perceive, sir, I do know your valour well:
Since you durst publish what you are, sir. Tarry,
I'll speak with you.
Volp. Sir, sir, another time—
Corv. Nay, now.
Volp. O gad, sir! I were a wise man,
Would stand the fury of a distracted cuckold,
[MOSCA *walks by them.*
Corb. What! come again?
Volp. Upon 'em, Mosca; save me.
Corb. The air's infected where he breathes.
Corv. Let's fly him.
Volp. Excellent basilisk! turn upon the vulture.

SCENE IX.

VOLTORE, MOSCA, *and* VOLPONE.

Volt. Well, flesh-fly, it is summer with you now:
Your winter will come on.
Mos. Good advocate,
Pr'y thee not rail, nor threaten out of place, thus;
Thou'lt make a solecism (as madam says.)
Get you a bigger more: your brain breaks loose.
Volt. Well, sir.
Volp. Would you ha' me beat the insolent slave?
Throw dirt upon his first good clothes?
Volt. This same
Is, doubtless, some familiar!
Volp. Sir, the court
In troth stays for you; I am mad, a mule,
That never read Justinian, should get up,
And ride an advocate. Had you no quirk,
To avoid gullage, sir, by such a creature?
I hope you do but jest; he has not done't:
This's but confederacy, to blind the rest.
You are the heir?
Volt. A strange, officious,
Troublesome knave! thou dost torment me.
Volp. I know
It cannot be, sir, that you should be cozen'd;
'Tis not within the wit of man to do it:
You are so wise, so prudent, and, 'tis fit,
That wealth and wisdom still should go together.

SCENE X.

Four Avocatori, NOTARIO, *Commandadore*, BONARIO, CELIA, CORBACCIO, CORVINO, VOLTORE, *and* VOLPONE.

1 *Avoc.* Are all the parties here?
Not. All but the advocate.
2 *Avoc.* And here he comes.
Avoc. Then bring 'em forth to sentence.
Volt. O, my most honour'd fathers, let your mercy
Once win upon your justice, to forgive—
I am distracted—
Volp. What will he do now?
Volt. O,
I know not which t' address myself to first,
Whether your fatherhoods, or those innocents—
Corv. Will he betray himself?
Volp. Whom, equally—
Volt. For which, now struck in conscience, here I prostrate
Myself at your offended feet for pardon.
1 2 *Avoc.* Arise.

Cel. O Heav'n! how just thou art!
Volp. I'm caught
I' mine own noose—
Corv. Be constant, sir, nought now
Can help, but impudence.
1 *Avoc.* Speak forward.
Com. Silence.
Volt. It is not passion in me, reverend fathers,
But only conscience, conscience, my good sires,
That makes me now tell truth. That parasite,
That knave hath been the instrument of all.
Avoc. Where is that knave? fetch him.
Volp. I go.
Corv. Grave fathers,
This man's distracted; he confess'd it now:
For, hoping to be old Volpone's heir,
Who now is dead—
3 *Avoc.* How?
2 *Avoc.* Is Volpone dead?
Corv. Dead since, grave fathers—
Bon. O, sure vengeance!
1 *Avoc.* Stay,
Then he was no deceiver?
Volt. O no, none:
The parasite, grave fathers.
Corv. He does speak
Out of mere envy, 'cause the servant's made
The thing he gap'd for; please your fatherhoods,
This is the truth: Though I'll not justify
The other, but he may be some-deal faulty.
Volt. Ay, to your hopes, as well as mine, Corvino:
But I'll use modesty. Pleaseth your wisdoms
To view these certain notes, and but confer them;
As I hope favour, they shall speak clear truth.
Corv. The devil has ent'red him!
Bon. Or bides in you.
4 *Avoc.* We have done ill by a public officer
To send for him, if he be heir.
2 *Avoc.* For whom?
4 *Avoc.* Him that they call the parasite.
3 *Avoc.* 'Tis true;
He is a man of great estate, now left.
4 *Avoc.* Go you, and learn his name; and say, the court
Entreats his presence here; but, to the clearing
Of some few doubts.
2 *Avoc.* This same's a labyrinth!
1 *Avoc.* Stand you unto your first report?
Corv. My state, my life, my fame——
Bon. Where is't?
Corv. Are at the stake.
1 *Avoc.* Is your's too?
Corb. The advocate's a knave:
And has a forked tongue——
2 *Avoc.* Speak to the point.
Corb. So is the parasite too.
1 *Avoc.* This is confusion.
Volt. I do beseech your fatherhoods, read but those.
Corv. And credit nothing the false spirit hath writ;
It cannot be, but he is possess'd, grave fathers.

SCENE XI.

VOLPONE, NANO, ANDROGINO, *and* CASTRONE.

Volp. To make a snare for mine own neck, and run
My head into it wilfully! with laughter!
When I had newly scap'd, was free, and clear!
Out of mere wantonness! O, the dull devil
Was in this brain of mine, when I devis'd it;
And Mosca gave it second: He must now
Help to sear up this vein, or we bleed dead.
How now! who let you loose! whither go you now?
What? to buy ginger-bread? or to drown kitlings?
Nan. Sir, master Mosca call'd us out of doors,
And bid us all go play, and took the keys.
And. Yes.
Volp. Did master Mosca take the keys? why so?
I am farther in. These are my fine conceits!
I must be merry, with a mischief to me!
What a vile wretch was I, that could not bear
My fortune soberly? I must ha' my crotchets!
And my conundrums! well, go you and seek him:
His meaning may be truer than my fear.
Bid him, he straight come to me to the court;
Thither will I, and, if't be possible,
Unscrew my advocate upon new hopes;
When I provok'd him, then I lost myself.

SCENE XII.

Avocatori, &c.

Avoc. These things can ne'er be reconcil'd. He, here,
Professeth, that the gentleman was wrong'd;
And that the gentlewoman was brought thither,
Forc'd by her husband, and there left.
Volp. Most true.
Cel. How ready is Heav'n to those that pra y!
1 *Avoc.* But, that
Volpone would have ravish'd her, he holds
Utterly false, knowing his impotence.
Corv. Grave fathers, he is possessed; again, I say,
Possessed: Nay, if there be possession,
And obsession, he has both.
3 *Avoc.* Here comes our officer.
Volp. The parasite will straight be here, grave fathers.
4 *Avoc.* You might invent some other name, Sir Varlet.
3 *Avoc.* Did not the notary meet him?
Volp. Not that I know.
4 *Avoc.* His coming will clear all.
2 *Avoc.* Yet it is misty.
Volt. May't please your fatherhoods——
Volp. Sir, the parasite
Will'd me to tell you, that his master lives;
[VOLPONE *whispers the Advocate.*
That you are still the man; your hopes the same;
And this was only a jest——

Volt. How?
Volp. Sir, to try
If you were firm, and how you stood affected.
Volt. Art sure he lives?
Volp. Do I live, sir?
Volt. O me!
I was too violent.
Volp. Sir, you may redeem it.
They said you were possest; fall down, and seem so: [VOLTORE *falls.*
I'll help to make it good.—God bless the man!
(Stop your wind hard, and swell) see, see, see, see!
He vomits crooked pins! his eyes are set,
Like a dead hare's hung in a poulterer's shop!
His mouth's running away! do you see, signior?
Now 'tis in his belly.
Corv. Ay, the devil!
Volp. Now in his throat.
Corv. Ay, I perceive it plain.
Volp. 'Twill out, 'twill out; stand clear. See where it flies!
In shape of a blue toad, with bat's wings!
Do not you see it, sir?
Corb. What? I think I do.
Corv. 'Tis too manifest.
Volp. Look, he comes t' himself!
Volt. Where am I?
Volp. Take good heart, the worst is past, sir.
You are dispossest.
1 *Avoc.* What accident is this?
2 *Avoc.* Sudden, and full of wonder!
3 *Avoc.* If he were
Possest, as it appears, all this is nothing.
Corv. He has been often subject to these fits.
1 *Avoc.* Shew him that writing; do you know it, sir?
Volp. Deny it, sir, forswear it, know it not.
Volt. Yes, I do know it well, it is my hand:
But all that it contains is false.
Bon. O practice!
2 *Avoc.* What maze is this!
1 *Avoc.* Is he not guilty then,
Whom you there name the parasite?
Volt. Grave fathers!
No more than his good patron, old Volpone.
4 *Avoc.* Why, he is dead?
Volt. O no, my honour'd fathers,
He lives——
1 *Avoc.* How! lives?
Volt. Lives.
2 *Avoc.* This is subtler yet!
3 *Avoc.* You said he was dead?
Volt. Never.
3 *Avoc.* You said so.
Corv. I heard so.
4 *Avoc.* Here comes the gentleman, make him way.
3 *Avoc.* A stool.
4 *Avoc.* A proper man! and, were Volpone dead,
A fit match for my daughter.
3 *Avoc.* Give him way.
Volp. Mosca, I was almost lost, the advocate
Had betray'd all; but now it is recover'd:
All's o' the hinge again——say, I am living.
Mos. What busy knave is this, most reverend fathers!
I sooner had attended your grave pleasures,
But that my order for the funeral
Of my dead patron did require me—
Volp. Mosca!
Mos. Whom I intend to bury like a gentleman.
Volp. Ay, quick, and cozen me of all.
2 *Avoc.* Still stranger!
More intricate!
1 *Avoc.* And come about again!
4 *Avoc.* It is a match, my daughter is bestow'd.
Mos. Will you gi' me half?
Volp. First, I'll be hang'd. } [*Aside.*
Mos. I know,
Your voice is good, cry not so loud—
1 *Avoc.* Demand
The advocate. Sir, did not you affirm
Volpone was alive?
Volp. Yes, and he is;
This gentleman told me so.—Thou shalt have half.
Mos. Whose drunkard is this same? speak some that know him:
I never saw his face.—I cannot now
Afford it you so cheap.
Volp. No?
1 *Avoc.* What say you?
Volt. The officer told me.
Volp. I did, grave fathers,
And will maintain he lives, with mine own life,
And that this creature told me.—I was born
With all good stars my enemies!
Mos. Most grave fathers,
If such an insolence as this must pass
Upon me, I am silent: 'Twas not this,
For which you sent, I hope.
2 *Avoc.* Take him away.
Volp. Mosca!
3 *Avoc.* Let him be whipp'd.
Volp. Wilt thou betray me! cozen me?
3 *Avoc.* And taught to bear himself
Toward a person of his rank.
4 *Avoc.* Away!
Mos. I humbly thank your fatherhoods.
Volp. Soft, soft:—whipp'd?
And lose all that I have? If I confess,
It cannot be much more.
4 *Avoc.* Sir, are you married?
Volp. They'll be allied, anon; I must be resolute:
The fox shall here uncase.
Mos. Patron!
Volp. Nay, now,
My ruin shall not come alone: your match
[*He puts off his disguise*
I'll hinder sure: my substance shall not glew you,
Nor screw you into a family.
Mos. Why, patron?
Volp. I am Volpone, and this is my knave;

This, his own knave; this avarice's fool;
This a chimera, of wittol, fool, and knave:
And, reverend fathers, since we all can hope
Nought but a sentence, let's not now despair it.
You hear me brief.
Corv. May it please your fatherhoods!—
Com. Silence.
1 *Avoc.* The knot is now undone, by miracle!
2 *Avoc.* Nothing can be more clear.
3 *Avoc.* Or can more prove these innocent.
1 *Avoc.* Give 'em their liberty.
Bon. Heav'n could not long let such gross crimes be hid.
2 *Avoc.* If this be held the highway to get riches,
May I be poor.
3 *Avoc.* This's not the gain, but torment.
1 *Avoc.* These possess wealth, as sick men possess fevers,
Which trulier may be said to possess them.
2 *Avoc.* Disrobe that parasite.
Corv. Mos. Most honour'd fathers!
1 *Avoc.* Can you plead aught to stay the course of justice?
If you can, speak.
Corv. Volt. We beg favour.
Cel. And mercy.
1 *Avoc.* You hurt your innocence, suing for the guilty.
Stand forth; and first the parasite. You appear
T'have been the chiefest minister, if not plotter,
In all these lewd impostures; and now, lastly,
Have, with your impudence, abus'd the court,
And habit of a gentleman of Venice,
Being a fellow of no birth or blood:
For which our sentence is, first thou be whipp'd,
Then live perpetual prisoner in our galleys.
Volt. I thank you for him.
Mos. Bane to thy wolfish nature!
1 *Avoc.* Deliver him to the Saffi. Thou, Volpone,
By blood and rank a gentleman, canst not fall
Under like censure; but our judgment on thee
Is, that thy substance all be strait confiscate
To the hospital of the *Incurabili*:
And, since the most was gotten by imposture,
By feigning lame, gout, palsy, and such diseases,
Thou art to lie in prison, cramp't with irons,
Till thou be'st sick and lame indeed.—Remove him!
Volp. This is call'd mortifying of a fox.
1 *Avoc.* Thou Voltore, to take away the scandal
Thou hast giv'n all worthy men of thy profession,
Art banish'd from their fellowship, and our state.
Corbaccio, bring him near. We here possess
Thy son of all thy state; and confine thee
To the monastery of *San' Spirito*:
Where, since thou knew'st not how to live well here,
Thou shalt be learn'd to die well.
Corb. Ha, what said he?
Com. You shall know anon, sir.
1 *Avoc.* Thou Corvino, shalt
Be straight embark'd from thine own house, and row'd
Round about Venice, through the grand canal,
Wearing a cap, with fair long ass's ears
Instead of horns; and so to mount, a paper
Pinn'd on thy breast, to the Berlino——
Corv. Yes,
And have mine eyes beat out with stinking fish,
Bruis'd fruit, and rotten eggs—'Tis well. I'm glad
I shall not see my shame yet.
1 *Avoc.* And to expiate
Thy wrongs done to thy wife, thou art to send her
Home to her father, with her dowry trebled:
And these are all your judgments.
All. Honoured fathers!
1 *Avoc.* Which may not be revok'd.—Now you begin,
When crimes are done and past, and to be punish'd,
To think what your crimes are: away with them!
Let all that see these vices thus rewarded,
Take heart, and love to study 'em. Mischiefs feed
Like beasts, 'till they be fat, and then they bleed.
[*Exeunt.*

VOLPONE.

The seas'ning of a play is the applause.
Now, though the fox be punish'd by the laws;
He yet doth hope there is no suff'ring due,
For any fact which he hath done 'gainst you;—
If there be, censure him:—here he doubtful stands:—
If not, fare jovially, and clap your hands!

THE

ALCHEMIST.

BY

BEN JONSON.

PROLOGUE.

FORTUNE, that favours fools, these two short hours
We wish away; both for your sakes and ours,
Judging spectators: and desire in place,
To th' author justice, to ourselves but grace.
Our scene is London, 'cause we would make known,
No country's mirth is better than our own.
No clime breeds better matter for your whore,
Bawd, squire, impostor, many persons more,
Whose manners, now call'd humours, feed the stage:
And which have still been subject, for the rage
Or spleen of comic-writers. Though this pen
Did never aim to grieve, but better men;
Howe'er the age he lives in, doth endure
The vices that she breeds, above their cure.
But, when the wholesome remedies are sweet,
And, in their working, gain and profit meet,
He hopes to find no spirit so much diseas'd,
But will, with such fair correctives, be pleas'd.
For here, he doth not fear, who can apply.
If there be any, that will sit so nigh
Unto the stream, to look what it doth run,
They shall find things, they'd think, or wish, were done;
They are so natural follies, but so shown,
As even the doers may see, and yet not own.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE sickness hot, a master quit, for fear,
His house in town: And left one servant there.
EASE him corrupted, and gave means to know
A cheater, and his punk; who, now brought low,
LEAVING the narrow practice, were become
COZ'NERS at large; and, only wanting some
HOUSE to set up, with him they here contract,
EACH for a share, and all begin to act.
MUCH company they draw, and much abuse,
IN casting figures, telling fortunes, news,
SELLING of flies, flat bawdry, with the stone:
TILL it, and they, and all in fume are gone.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SUBTLE, *the Alchemist.*
FACE, *the Housekeeper.*
Sir EPICURE MAMMON, *a Knight.*
SURLY, *a Gamester.*
LOVE-WIT, *Master of the House.*
TRIBULATION, *a Pastor of Amsterdam.*
ANANIAS, *a Deacon there.*
ABEL DRUGGER, *a Tobacco-man.*
DAPPER, *a Clerk.*
KASTRIL, *the Angry Boy.*
DAME PLIANT, *Sister to Kastril, a Widow.*
DOL COMMON, *Colleague with Subtle and Face, Neighbours, Officers, and Mutes.*

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter FACE, SUBTLE, *and* DOL COMMON.

Face. BELIEV'T, I will.
Sub. Thy worst. I fart at thee.
Dol. Ha' you your wits? Why, gentlemen! for love——
Face. Sirrah, I'll strip you——
Sub. What to do? lick figs out at my——
Face. Rogue, rogue, out of all your sleights.
Dol. Nay, look ye! Sovereign, general, are you madmen?
Sub. O, let the wild sheep loose. I'll gum your silks
With good strong water, an' you come.
Dol. Will you have
The neighbours hear you? will you betray all?
Hark, I hear somebody.
Face. Sirrah——
Sub. I shall mar
All that the tailor has made, if you approach.
Face. You most notorious whelp, you insolent slave,
Dare you do this?
Sub. Yes faith, yes faith.
Face. Why! who am I, my mongrel? Who am I?
Sub. I'll tell you,
Since you know not yourself——
Face. Speak lower, rogue.
Sub. Yes. You were once (time's not long past) the good,
Honest, plain, livery-three-pound-thrum, that kept
Your master's worship's house here in the Friars,
For the vacations——
Face. Will you be so loud?
Sub. Since, by my means, translated suburb-captain.
Face. By your means, doctor Dog?
Sub. Within man's memory,
All this I speak of.
Face. Why, I pray you, have I
Been countenanced by you? or you by me?
Do but collect, sir, where I met you first.
Sub. I do not hear well.
Face. Not of this, I think it,
But I shall put you in mind, sir: at Pye-Corner,
Taking your meal of steam in, from cooks' stalls,
Where, like the father of hunger, you did walk
Piteously costive, with your pinched-horn nose,
And your complexion, of the Roman wash,
Stuck full of black and melancholic worms,
Like powder-corns shot at the artillery yard.
Sub. I wish you could advance your voice a little.
Face. When you went pinned up in the several rags
You'd raked, and picked from dung-hills, before day,
Your feet in mouldy slippers, for your kibes,
A felt of rug, and a thin threaden cloak,
That scarce would cover your no-buttocks——
Sub. No, sir!
Face. When all your alchemy, and your algebra,
Your minerals, vegetals, and animals,
Your conj'ring, cos'ning, and your dozen of trades,
Could not relieve your corps with so much linen
Would make you tinder, but to see a fire;
I gat you countenance, credit for your coals,
Your stills, your glasses, your materials,
Built you a furnace, drew you customers,
Advanced all your black arts; lent you, beside,

A house to practise in——
Sub. Your master's house.
Face. Where you have studied the more thriving skill
Of bawdry since.
Sub. Yes, in your master's house.
You and the rats here kept possession.
Make it not strange. I know you were one could keep
The buttry-hatch still locked, and save the chippings,
Sell the dole-beer to *aqua-vitæ* men,
The which, together with your Christmas vails,
At post and pair, your letting out of counters,
Made you a pretty stock, some twenty marks,
And gave you credit, to converse with cobwebs,
Here, since your mistress's death hath broke up house.
Face. You might talk softlier, rascal.
Sub. No, you scarabe,
I'll thunder you in pieces. I will teach you
How to beware to tempt a fury again,
That carries tempest in his hand and voice.
Face. The place has made you valiant.
Sub. No, your cloaths.
Thou vermin, have I ta'en thee out of dung,
So poor, so wretched, when no living thing
Would keep thee company but a spider, or worse?
Raised thee from brooms, and dust, and watering pots?
Sublimed thee, and exalted thee, and fixed thee
I' the third region, called our state of grace?
Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence, with pains
Would twice have won me the philosopher's work?
Put thee in words and fashion? made thee fit
For more than ordinary fellowships?
Given thee thy oaths, thy quarrelling dimensions?
Thy rules to cheat at horse-race, cock-pit, cards,
Dice, or whatever gallant tincture else?
Made thee a second in mine own great art?
And have I this for thank? do you rebel?
Do you fly out i' the projection?
Would you be gone now?
Dol. Gentlemen, what mean you?
Will you mar all?
Sub. Slave, thou hadst had no name——
Dol. Will you undo yourselves with civil war?
Sub. Never been known, past *equi clibanum*,
The heat of horse-dung under ground, in cellars,
Or an ale-house darker than deaf John's: been lost
To all mankind but laundresses and tapsters,
Had not I been.
Dol. Do you know who hears you, sovereign?
Face. Sirrah—
Dol. Nay, general, I thought you were civil—
Face. I shall turn desperate, if you grow thus loud.
Sub. And hang thyself, I care not.
Face. Hang thee, collier,
And all thy pots and pans, in picture I will,
Since thou hast moved me.—
Dol. O, this'll o'erthrow all.
Face. Write thee up bawd in Paul's; have all thy tricks
Of coz'ning with a hollow cole, dust, scrapings,
Searching for things lost with a sieve and shears,
Erecting figures in your rows of houses,
And taking in of shadows with a glass,
Told in red letters; and a face cut for thee,
Worse than Gamaliel Ratsey's.
Dol. Are you sound?
Ha' you your senses, masters?
Face. I will have
A book, but barely reckoning thy impostures,
Shall prove a true philosopher's stone to printers.
Sub. Away, you trencher-rascal.
Face. Out, you dog-leech,
The vomit of all prisons.—
Dol. Will you be
Your own destructions, gentlemen?
Face. Still spewed out
For lying too heavy o' the basket.
Sub. Cheater.
Face. Bawd.
Sub. Cow-herd.
Face. Conjurer.
Sub. Cut-purse.
Face. Witch.
Dol. O me!
We are ruined! lost! ha' you no more regard
To your reputations? where's your judgment? S'light,
Have yet some care of me, o' your republic—
Face. Away this brach! I'll bring thee, rogue, within
The statute of sorcery, *tricesimo tertio*,
Of Henry VIII; ay, and perhaps thy neck
Within a noose, for laundring gold, and barbing it.
Dol. You'll bring your head within a cock's-comb, will you?
[*She catches out* FACE'S *sword, and breaks* SUBTLE'S *glass.*]
And you, sir, with your menstrue, gather it up.
'Sdeath, you abominable pair of stinkards,
Leave off your barking, and grow one again,
Or, by the light that shines, I'll cut your throats.
I'll not be made a prey unto the marshal,
For ne'er a snarling dog-bolt o' you both.
Ha' you together cozened all this while,
And all the world, and shall it now be said
You've made most courteous shift to cozen yourselves?
You will accuse him? You will bring him in
Within the statute? Who shall take your word?
A whoreson, upstart, apocryphal captain,
Whom not a puritan in Black-friars will trust
So much as for a feather! And you, too,
Will give the cause, forsooth? You will insult,
And claim a primacy in the divisions?
You must be chief? as if you only had
The powder to project with? and the work
Were not begun out of equality?
The *venter tripartite*? all things in common?
Without priority? 'Sdeath, you perpetual curs,
Fall to your couples again, and cozen kindly,
And heartily, and lovingly, as you should,
And lose not the beginning of a term,
Or, by this hand, I shall grow factious too,
And take my part, and quit you.

Face. 'Tis his fault,
He ever murmurs, and objects his pains,
And says, the weight of all lies upon him.
Sub. Why, so it does.
Dol. How does it? do not we
Sustain our parts?
Sub. Yes, but they are not equal.
Dol. Why, if your part succeed to-day, I hope
Ours may to-morrow match it.
Sub. Ay, they may.
Dol. May, murmuring mastiff? ay, and do.
Death on me!
Help me to throttle him.
Sub. Dorothy, mistress Dorothy,
O'ds precious, I'll do any thing. What do you
mean?
Dol. Because o' your fermentation and cibation?
Sub. Not I, by Heaven—
Dol. Your Sol and Luna—help me.
Sub. Would I were hanged then. I'll conform
myself.
Dol. Will you, sir? do so then, and quickly:
swear.
Sub. What should I swear?
Dol. To leave your faction, sir,
And labour kindly in the common work.
Sub. Let me not breathe, if I meant aught be-
side.
I only used those speeches as a spur
To him.
Dol. I hope we need no spurs, sir, do we?
Face. 'Slid, prove to-day who shall shark best.
Sub. Agreed.
Dol. Yes, and work close and friendly.
Sub. 'Slight, the knot
Shall grow the stronger for this breach with me.
Dol. Why so, my good baboons! shall we go
make
A sort of sober, scurvy, precise neighbours,
(That scarce have smiled twice sin' the king
came in)
A feast of laughter at our follies? Rascals,
Would run themselves from breath to see me ride,
Or you t'have but a hole to thrust your heads in,
For which you should pay ear-rent? No, agree.
And may Don Provost ride a-feasting long,
In his old velvet jerkin and stained scarves,
(My noble sovereign, and worthy general)
Ere we contribute a new crewel-garter
To his most worsted worship.
Sub. Royal Dol!
Spoken like Claridians and thyself!
Face. For which, at supper, thou shalt sit in
triumph,
And not be styled Dol Common, but Dol Proper,
Dol Singular: the longest cut at night
Shall draw thee for his Dol Particular.
Sub. Who's that? one rings. To the window.
Dol. Pray Heaven
The master do not trouble us this quarter.
Face. O, fear not him. While there dies one
a-week
O' the plague, he's safe from thinking toward
London.
Beside, he's busy at his hop-yards now:
I had a letter from him. If he do,
He'll send such word, for airing o' the house,
As you shall have sufficient time to quit it:
Though we break up a fortnight, 'tis no matter.
Sub. Who is it, Dol?
Dol. A fine young quodling.
Face. O,
My lawyer's clerk, I lighted on last night
In Holborn, at the Dagger. He would have
(I told you of him) a familiar,
To rifle with at horses, and win cups.
Dol. O, let him in.
Sub. Stay. Who shall do't?
Face. Get you
Your robes on. I will meet him, as going out.
Dol. And what shall I do?
Face. Not be seen; away.
Seem you very reserved.
Sub. Enough.
Face. Good be wi' you, sir.
I pray you, let him know that I was here.
His name is Dapper. I would gladly have staid,
but—

SCENE II.

Enter DAPPER.

Dap. Captain. I am here.
Face. Who's that? He's come, I think, doctor.
Good faith, sir, I was going away.
Dap. In truth, I'm very sorry, captain.
Face. But I thought, sure, I should meet you.
Dap. Ay, I'm very glad.
I'd a scurvy writ or two to make,
And I had lent my watch last night to one
That dines to-day at the sheriff's; and so was
robbed
Of my pastime. Is this the cunning man?
Face. This is his worship.
Dap. Is he a doctor?
Face. Yes.
Dap. And ha' you broke with him, captain?
Face. Ay.
Dap. And how?
Face. Faith, he does make the matter, sir, so
dainty,
I know not what to say—
Dap. Not so, good captain.
Face. Would I were fairly rid on't, believe me.
Dap. Nay, now you grieve me, sir. Why should
you wish so?
I dare assure you I'll not be ungrateful.
Face. I cannot think you will, sir. But the law
Is such a thing—and then he says, Read's matter
Falling so lately—
Dap. Read? he was an ass,
And dealt, sir, with a fool.
Face. It was a clerk, sir.
Dap. A clerk?
Face. Nay, hear me, sir. You know the law
Better, I think—
Dap. I should, sir, and the danger.
You know I shewed the statute to you?
Face. You did so.

Dap. And will I tell, then? By this hand of flesh,
Would it might never write good court-hand more,
If I discover. What do you think of me?
That I am a Chiause?
Face. What's that?
Dap. The Turk was here—
As one would say, do you think I am a Turk?
Face. I'll tell the doctor so.
Dap. Do, good sweet captain.
Face. Come, noble doctor, 'pray thee, let's prevail.
This is the gentleman, and he is no Chiause.
Sub. Captain, I have returned you all my answer.
I would do much, sir, for your love—But this
I neither may nor can.
Face. Tut, do not say so.
You deal now with a noble fellow, doctor.
One that will thank you, richly, and he's no Chiause:
Let that, sir, move you.
Sub. Pray you, forbear—
Face. He has four angels here—
Sub. You do me wrong, good sir.
Face. Doctor, wherein? To tempt you with these spirits?
Sub. To tempt my art and love, sir, to my peril.
'Fore Heaven, I scarce can think you are my friend,
That so would draw me to apparent danger.
Face. I draw you? A horse draw you, and a halter,
You, and your flies together—
Dap. Nay, good captain.
Face. That know no difference of men.
Sub. Good words, sir.
Face. Good deeds, sir, Doctor Dog's-meat. 'Slight, I bring you
No cheating Clim-o'the-cloughs, or Claribels,
That look as big as five-and-fifty, and flush,
And spit out secrets, like hot custard—
Dap. Captain.
Face. Nor any melancholic under-scribe
Shall tell the vicar: but a special gentle,
That is the heir to forty marks a-year,
Consorts with the small poets of the time,
Is the sole hope of his old grandmother,
That knows the law, and writes you six fair hands,
Is a fine clerk, and has his cyphering perfect,
Will take his oath o' th' Greek Xenophon,
If need be, in his pocket; and can court
His mistress out of Ovid.
Dap. Nay, dear captain.
Face. Did you not tell me so?
Dap. Yes, but I'd ha' you
Use Master Doctor with some more respect.
Face. Hang him, proud stag, with his broad velvet head.
But, for your sake, I'd choak, ere I would change
An article of breath with such a puck-fist—
Come, let's begone.
Sub. Pray you, let me speak with you.
Dap. His worship calls you, captain.
Face. I am sorry
I e'er embarked myself in such a business.
Dap. Nay, good sir. He did call you.
Face. Will he take, then?
Sub. First hear me—
Face. Not a syllable, 'less you take.
Sub. Pray ye, sir—
Face. Upon no terms but an assumpsit.
Sub. Your humour must be law.
Face. Why now, sir, talk. [*He takes the money.*
Now I dare hear you with mine honour, speak.
So may this gentleman too.
Sub. Why, sir—
Face. No whispering.
Sub. 'Fore Heaven, you do not apprehend the loss
You do yourself in this.
Face. Wherein? for what?
Sub. Marry, to be so importunate for one,
That, when he has it, will undo you all:
He'll win up all the money i' the town.
Face. How!
Sub. Yes: and blow up gamester after gamester,
As they do crackers in a puppet-play.
If I do give him a familiar,
Give you him all your play for; never set him:
For he will have it.
Face. You're mistaken, doctor.
Why, he does ask one but for cups, and horses,
A rifling-fly:—none o' your great familiars.
Dap. Yes, captain, I would have it for all games.
Sub. I told you so.
Face. 'Slight, that's a new business!
I understood you, a tame bird to fly
Twice in a term, or so; on Friday nights,
When you had left the office; for a nag
Of forty or fifty shillings.
Dap. Ay, 'tis true, sir,
But I do think now I shall leave the law,
And therefore——
Face. Why, this changes quite the case!
D'you think that I dare move him?
Dap. If you please, sir;
All's one to him, I see.
Face. What! for that money?
I cannot with my conscience. Nor should you
Make the request, methinks.
Dap. No, sir, I mean
To add consideration.
Face. Why, then, sir,
I'll try.—Say that it were for all games, doctor?
Sub. I say, then, not a mouth shall eat for him
At any ordinary, but o'the score,
That is a gaming mouth, conceive me.
Face. Indeed!
Sub. He'll draw you all the treasure of the realm,
If it be set him.
Face. Speak you this from art?
Sub. Ay, sir, and reason too; the ground of art.
He's o' the only best complexion
The queen of Fairy loves.
Face. What! is he!

Sub. Peace; he'll overhear you.
Sir, should she but see him——
Face. What?
Sub. Do not you tell him.
Face. Will he win at cards too?
Sub. The spirits of dead Holland, living Isaac,
You'd swear were in him: Such a vigorous luck
As cannot be resisted. 'Slight, he'll put
Six o' your gallants to a cloak, indeed.
Face. A strange success, that some men shall be born to!
Sub. He hears you, man—
Dap. Sir, I'll not be ungrateful.
Face. Faith, I have a confidence in his good nature:
You hear, he says, he will not be ungrateful.
Sub. Why, as you please, my venture follows yours.
Face. Troth do it, doctor. Think him trusty, and make him.
He may make us both happy in an hour:
Win some five thousand pound, and send us two on't.
Dap. Believe it, and I will, sir.
Face. And you shall, sir.
You have heard all?
Dap. No, what was't?—Nothing, I, sir.
[FACE *takes him aside.*
Face. Nothing?
Dap. A little, sir.
Face. Well, a rare star
Reign'd at your birth.
Dap. At mine, sir?—no.
Face. The doctor
Swears that you are——
Sub. Nay, captain, you'll tell all now.
Face. Allied to the Queen of Fairy.
Dap. Who? that I am?
Believe it, no such matter——
Face. Yes, and that
You were born with a caul o'your head.
Dap. Who says so?
Face. Come,
You know it well enough, though you dissemble it.
Dap. I-fac, I do not. You are mistaken.
Face. How!
Swear by your fac? and in a thing so known
Unto the doctor? How shall we, sir, trust you
I' the other matter? Can we ever think,
When you have won five or six thousand pound,
You'll send us shares in't, by this rate?
Dap. By Jove, sir,
I'll win ten thousand pound, and send you half.
I-fac's no oath.
Sub. No, no, he did but jest.
Face. Go too; go, thank the doctor.
He's your friend to take it so.
Dap. I thank his worship.
Face. So?
Another angel.
Dap. Must I?
Face. Must you? 'Slight,
What else is thanks? Will you be trivial?—Doctor,
When must he come for his familiar?
Dap. Shall I not have't with me?
Sub. O, good sir!
There must a world of ceremonies pass,
You must be bath'd and fumigated first;
Besides the queen of Fairy does not rise
'Till it be noon.
Face. Not, if she danc'd to-night.
Sub. And she must bless it.
Face. Did you never see
Her royal grace yet?
Dap. Whom?
Face. Your aunt of Fairy?
Sub. Not since she kiss'd him in the cradle, captain,
I can resolve you that.
Face. Well, see her grace,
Whate'er it cost you, for a thing that I know.
It will be somewhat hard to compass: But,
However, see her. You are made, believe it,
If you can see her. Her grace is a lone woman,
And very rich; and, if she take a fancy,
She will do strange things. See her, at any hand;
'Slid, she may hap to leave you all she has!
It is the doctor's fear.
Dap. How will't be done, then?
Face. Let me alone, take you no thought.—Do you
But say to me,—Captain, I'll see her grace.
Dap. Captain, I'll see her grace.
Face. Enough.
Sub. Who's there? [*One knocks without.*
Anon!—Conduct him forth by the back way.
Sir, against one o'clock prepare yourself.
'Till when you must be fasting; only take
Three drops of vinegar in at your nose,
Two at your mouth, and one at either ear:
Then bathe your fingers ends, and wash your eyes,
To sharpen your five senses; and cry hum
Thrice; and then buzz, as often; and then, come.
Face. Can you remember this?
Dap. I warrant you.
Face. Well, then, away. 'Tis but your bestowing
Some twenty nobles 'mong her grace's servants;
And put on a clean shirt: You do not know
What grace her Grace may do you in clean linen.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter SUBTLE, DRUGGER, *and* FACE.

Sub. Come in.—Good wives, I pray you forbear me now;
Troth I can do you no good 'till afternoon.—
What is your name say you, Abel Drugger?
Drug. Yes, sir.
Sub. A seller of tobacco?
Drug. Yes, sir.
Sub. 'Umh!
Free of the grocers?
Drug. Ay, an't please you.
Sub. Well——
Your business, Abel?
Drug. This, an't please your worship:

I'm a young beginner, and am building
Of a new shop, an't like your worship, just
At corner of a street:—here's the plot on't—
And I would know, by art, sir, of your worship,
Which way I should make my door, by necromancy,
And where my shelves? And which should be for boxes,
And which for pots?—I would be glad to thrive, sir!
And I was wish'd to your worship by a gentleman,
One captain Face, that says you know men's planets,
And their good angels, and their bad.
Sub. I do,
If I do see 'em——
Face. What! my honest Abel?
Thou art well met here!
Drug. Troth, sir, I was speaking,
Just as your worship came here, of your worship.
I pray you, speak for me to master doctor.
Face. He shall do any thing.—Doctor, do you hear?
This is my friend Abel, an honest fellow,
He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not
Sophisticate it with sack-lees, or oil,
Nor washes it in muscadel and grains,
Nor buries it in gravel under ground,
Wrapp'd up in greasy leather, or piss'd clouts:
But keeps it in fine lily-pots, that, open'd,
Smell like conserve of roses, or French beans.
He has his maple-block, his silver tongs,
Winchester pipes, and fire of juniper:—
A neat, spruce, honest fellow, and no goldsmith.
Sub. He's a fortunate fellow, that I am sure on—
Face. Already, sir, ha'you found it? Lo'thee, Abel!
Sub. And in right way tow'rd riches—
Face. Sir!
Sub. This summer
He will be of the cloathing of his company;
And, next spring, call'd to the scarlet. Spend what he can.
Face. What, and so little beard?
Sub. Sir, you must think,
He may have a receipt to make hair come.
But he'll be wise, preserve his youth, and fine for't:
His fortune looks for him another way.
Face. 'Slid, doctor, how canst thou know this so soon?
I'm amus'd at that!
Sub. By a rule, captain,
In metaposcopy, which I do work by,
A certain star i'th'forehead, which you see not.
Your chesnut, or your olive-colour'd face,
Does never fail; and your long ear doth promise.
I knew't by certain spots, too, in his teeth,
And on the nail of his mercurial finger.
Face. Which finger's that?
Sub. His little finger. Look,
You were born upon a Wednesday?
Drug. Yes, indeed, sir.
Sub. The thumb, in chiromanty, we give Venus;
The fore-finger to Jove; the midst to Saturn;
The ring to Sol; the least, to Mercury:
Who was the lord, sir, of the horoscope,
His house of life being Libra, which foreshew'd
He should be a merchant, and should trade with balance.
Face. Why, this is strange! Is't not, honest Nab?
Sub. There is a ship now coming from Ormus,
That shall yield him such a commodity
Of drugs—This is the west, and this the south?
Drug. Yes, sir.
Sub. And those are your two sides?
Drug. Ay, sir.
Sub. Make me your door, then, south; your broadside, west:
And, on the east side of your shop, aloft,
Write Mathlai, Tarmiel, and Baraborat;
Upon the north part, Rael, Velel, Thiel.
They are the names of those mercurial spirits,
That do fright flies from boxes.
Drug. Yes, sir.
Sub. And
Beneath your threshold, bury me a loadstone,
To draw in gallants that wear spurs: The rest
They'll seem to follow.
Face. That's a secret, Nab!
Sub. And, on your stall, a puppet, with a vice,
And a court-fucus, to call city-dames.—
You shall deal much with minerals.
Drug. Sir, I have
At home, already——
Sub. Ay, I know, you've arsenic,
Vitriol, sal-tartar, argail, alkali,
Cinoper: I know all.—This fellow, captain,
Will come in time to be a great distiller,
And give a say (I will not say directly,
But very fair) at the philosopher's stone!
Face. Why, how now, Abel! Is this true?
Drug. Good captain,
What must I give?
Face. Nay, I'll not counsel thee.
Thou hear'st what wealth (he says spend what thou canst)
Thou'rt like to come to.
Drug. I would gi' him a crown.
Face. A crown! and tow'rd such a fortune! Heart,
Thou shalt rather gi' him thy shop.——No gold about thee?
Drug. Yes, I have a Portague, I ha' kept this half year.
Face. Out on thee, Nab; 'Slight, there was such an offer——
'Shalt keep't no longer, I'll gi't him for thee.—
Doctor, Nab prays your worship to drink this; and swears
He will appear more grateful, as your skill
Does raise him in the world.
Drug. I would intreat
Another favour of his worship.
Face. What is't, Nab?
Drug. But to look over, sir, my almanack,

And cross out my ill days, that I may neither
Bargain, nor trust upon them.
Face. That he shall, Nab.
Leave it, it shall be done 'gainst afternoon.
Sub. And a direction for his shelves.
Face. Now, Nab?
Art thou well pleas'd, Nab?
Drug. Thank, sir, both your worships.
Face. Away! [*Exit* DRUG.
Why now, you smoky persecutor of Nature!
Now, do you see, that something is to be done
Beside your beech-coal, and your cor'sive waters,
Your croslets, crucibles, and cucurbites?
You must have stuff brought home to you, to work on?
And yet you think I am at no expence,
In searching out these veins, then following 'em,
Then trying 'em out. 'Fore God, my intelligence
Costs me more money than my share oft comes to
In these rare works.
Sub. You're pleasant, sir. How now?

SCENE IV.

FACE, DOLL, *and* SUBTLE.

Sub. What says my dainty Dolkin?
Dol. Yonder fishwife
Will not away. And there's your giantess,
The bawd of Lambeth.
Sub. Heart, I cannot speak with 'em.
Dol. Not afore night, I have told 'em, in a voice,
Through the trunk, like one of your familiars.
But I have spied Sir Epicure Mammon——
Sub. Where?
Dol. Coming along, at far end of the lane,
Slow of his feet, but earnest of his tongue,
To one that's with him.
Sub. Face, go you, and shift.
Dol, you must presently make ready too——
Dol. Why, what's the matter?
Sub. O, I did look for him
With the sun's rising: Marvel he could sleep!
This is the day I am to perfect for him
The magisterium, our great work, the stone,
And yield it, made, into his hands: Of which
He has this month talk'd, as he were possess'd;
And now he's dealing pieces on't away.
Methinks I see him ent'ring ordinaries,
Dispensing for the pox; to plaguy-houses,
Reaching his dose; walking Moorfields for lepers;
And off'ring citizens' wives pomander bracelets,
As his preservative, made of the elixir;
Searching the Spittle, to make old bawds young;
And the highways for beggars, to make rich:
I see no end of his labours. He will make
Nature asham'd of her long sleep; when Art,
Who's but a step-dame, shall do more than she,
In her best love to mankind, ever could.—
If his dream last, he'll turn the age to gold!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MAMMON *and* SURLY.

Mam. Come on, sir. Now you set your foot on shore
In *novo orbe*: Here's the rich Peru:
And there within, sir, are the golden mines,
Great Solomon's Ophir! He was sailing to't
Three years, but we have reach'd it in ten months.—
This is the day wherein, to all my friends,
I will pronounce the happy word, Be rich!
This day you shall be *spectatissimi!*
You shall no more deal with the hollow die,
Or the frail card. No more be at charge of keeping
The livery punk for the young heir, that must
Seal at all hours in his shirt. No more,
If he deny, ha' him beaten to it, as he is
That brings him the commodity. No more
Shall thirst of satin, or the covetous hunger
Of velvet-entrails, for a rude-spun cloak,
To be display'd at Madam Augusta's, make
The sons of sword and hazard fall before
The golden calf, and on their knees, whole nights,
Commit idolatry with wine and trumpets,
Or go a-feasting after drum and ensign.—
No more of this. You shall start up young viceroys,
And have your punques and punquettees, my Surly!
And unto thee, I speak it first, Be rich!—
Where is my Subtle, there? Within ho?
[*Within.*] Sir,
He'll come to you by and by.
Mam. That's his fire-drake,
His lungs, his zephyrus, he that puffs his coals,
Till he firk Nature up, in her own centre.
You are not faithful, sir. This night, I'll change
All that is metal in thy house to gold.
And, early in the morning, will I send
To all the plumbers, and the pewterers,
And buy their tin and lead up; and to Lothbury
For all the copper.
Sur. What, and turn that too?
Mam. Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,
And make them perfect Indies. You admire now?
Sur. No, faith.
Mam. But when you see th' effects of the great medicine!
Of which one part projected on a hundred
Of Mercury, or Venus, or the moon,
Shall turn it to as many of the sun;
Nay, to a thousand, so *ad infinitum*:

You will believe me?
Sur. Yes, when I see't, I will.
But, if my eyes do cozen me so, and I
Giving 'em no occasion, sure I'll have
A whore shall piss 'em out next day.
Mam. Ha! why?
Do you think I fable with you? I assure you,
He that has once the flower of the sun,
The perfect ruby, which we call elixir,
Not only can do that, but by its virtue,
Can confer honour, love, respect, long life,
Give safety, valour, yea, and victory,
To whom he will. In eight and twenty days,
I'll make an old man of fourscore, a child.
Sur. No doubt, he's that already.
Mam. Nay, I mean,
Restore his years, renew him, like an eagle,
To the fifth age; make him get sons and daughters,
Young giants; as our philosophers have done,
(The ancient patriarchs before the flood)
But taking, once a-week, on a knife's point,
The quantity of a grain of mustard, of it:
Become stout Marses, and beget young Cupids.
Sur. The decay'd vestals of Pickthatch would thank you,
That keep the fire alive, there.
Mam. 'Tis the secret
Of nature, naturiz'd 'gainst all infections,
Cures all diseases, coming of all causes,
A month's grief, in a day, a year's, in twelve:
And, of what age soever, in a month.
Past all the doses of your drugging doctors.
I'll undertake, withal, to fright the plague
Out of the kingdom in three months.
Sur. And I'll
Be bound, the players shall sing your praises, then,
Without their poets.
Mam. Sir, I'll do't. Mean time,
I'll give away so much, unto my man,
Shall serve the whole city, with preservative,
Weekly, each house his dose, and at the rate—
Sur. As he that built the water-work, does with water?
Mam. You are incredulous.
Sur. Faith, I have a humour,
I would not willingly be gull'd. Your stone
Cannot transmute me.
Mam. Pertinax, Surly,
Will you believe antiquity? records?
I'll shew you a book, where Moses, and his sister,
And Solomon, have written of the art;
Ay, and a treatise penn'd by Adam.
Sur. How?
Mam. O' the philosopher's stone, and in High Dutch.
Sur. Did Adam write, sir, in High Dutch?
Mam. He did:
Which proves it was the primitive tongue.
Sur. What paper?
Mam. On cedar-board.
Sur. O that, indeed, they say,
Will last 'gainst worms.
Mam. 'Tis like your Irish wood,
'Gainst cobwebs. I have a piece of Jason's fleece, too,
Which was no other than a book of alchemy,
Writ in a large sheep-skin, a good fat ram-vellum.
Such was Pythagoras's thigh, Pandora's tub;
And all that fable of Medea's charms,
The manner of our work: The bulls, our furnace,
Still breathing fire; our argent-vive, the dragon:
The dragon's teeth, mercury sublimate,
That keeps the whiteness, hardness, and the biting;
And they are gather'd into Jason's helm,
(Th' alembec) and then sow'd in Mars' field,
And, thence, sublim'd so often, 'till they are fix'd.
Both this, th' Hesperian garden, Cadmus's story,
Jove's shower, the boon of Midas, Argus's eyes,
Boccace's demogorgon, thousands more,
All abstract riddles of our stone. How now?

SCENE II.

MAMMON, FACE, *and* SURLY.

Do we succeed? Is our day come? and holds it?
Face. The evening will set red upon you, sir;
You have colour for it, crimson: The red ferment
Has done his office. Three hours hence, prepare you
To see projection.
Mam. Pertinax, my Surly,
Again, I say to thee, aloud, be rich.
This day thou shalt have ingots: and, to-morrow,
Give lords th' affront. Is it, my Zephyrus, right?
Blushes the bolts-head?
Face. Like a wench with child, sir,
That were but now discover'd to her master.
Mam. Excellent witty Lungs! My only care is,
Where to get stuff enough now to project on,
This town will not half serve me.
Face. No, sir? Buy
The covering of churches.
Mam. That's true.
Face. Yes,
Let 'em stand bare, as they do for auditory.
Or cap 'em new with shingles.
Mam. No, good thatch:
Thatch will lie light upon the rafters. Lungs.
Lungs, I will manumit thee from the furnace;
I will restore thee thy complexion, Puff,
Lost in the embers; and repair this brain,
Hurt with the fume o' the metals.
Face. I have blown, sir,
Hard, for your worship; thrown by many a coal,
When 'twas not beech; weigh'd those I put in, just,
To keep your heat still even; these blear'd eyes
Have wak'd to read your several colours, sir,
Of the pale citron, the green lion, the crow,
The peacock's tail, the plum'd swan.
Mam. And, lastly,
Thou hast descry'd the flower, the *sanguis agni*?

Face. Yes, sir.
Mam. Where's master?
Face. At his prayers, sir, he;
Good man, he's doing his devotions,
For the success.
Mam. Lungs, I will set a period,
To all thy labours: Thou shalt be the master
Of my seraglio.
Face. Good, sir.
Mam. But do you hear?
I'll geld you, Lungs.
Face. Yes, sir.
Mam. For I do mean
To have a list of wives and concubines
Equal with Solomon; who had the stone,
Alike with me: and I will make me a back,
With the elixir, that shall be as tough
As Hercules, to encounter fifty a night.
Thou'rt sure, thou saw'st it blood?
Face. Both blood and spirit, sir.
Mam. I will have all my beds blown up; not stuft:
Down is too hard. And then, mine oval room,
Fill'd with such pictures, as Tiberius took
From Elephantis; and dull Aretine
But coldly imitated. Then, my glasses,
Cut in more subtle angles, to disperse
And multiply the figures, as I walk
Naked between my succube. My mists
I'll have of perfume, vapour'd 'bout the room,
To lose ourselves in; and my baths, like pits
To fall into: from whence we will come forth,
And roll us dry in gossamour and roses.
(Is it arriv'd at ruby?)——Where I spy
A wealthy citizen, or rich lawyer,
Have a sublim'd pure wife, unto that fellow
I'll send a thousand pound, to be my cuckold.
Face. And I shall carry it?
Mam. No, I'll ha' no bawds,
But fathers and mothers. They will do it best,
Best of all others. And my flatterers
Shall be the pure, and gravest of divines,
That I can get for money. My mere fools,
Eloquent burgesses: And then my poets,
The same that write so subtly of the Fart,
Whom I will entertain, still, for that subject.
The few, that would give out themselves, to be
Court and town stallions, and each where belie
Ladies, who are known most innocent for them;
Those will I beg to make me eunuchs of:
And they shall fan me with ten ostrich tails
A-piece, made in a plume to gather wind.
We will be brave, Puff, now we ha' the med'cine.
My meat shall all come in, in Indian shells,
Dishes of agate, set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, saphirs, hyacinths, and rubies.
The tongues of carps, dormice, and camels' heels,
Boil'd i' the spirit of Sol, and dissolv'd pearl,
(Apicius's diet 'gainst the epilepsy)
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
Headed with diamond and carbuncle.
My footboy shall eat pheasants, calver'd salmons,
Knots, godwits, lampreys: I myself will have
The beards of barbles, serv'd instead of sallads;
Oil'd mushrooms; and the swelling unctuous paps
Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
Drest with an exquisite and poignant sauce;
For which I'll say unto my cook, there's gold,
Go forth, and be a knight.
Face. Sir, I'll go look
A little how it heightens.
Mam. Do. My shirts
I'll have of taffata-sarsnet, soft, and light
As cobwebs; and for all other raiment,
It shall be such, as might provoke the Persian;
Were he to teach the world riot anew.
My gloves of fishes and birds skins, perfum'd
With gums of paradise, and eastern air——
Sur. And do you think to have the stone with this?
Mam. No, I do think t' have all this with the stone.
Sur. Why, I have heard, he must be *homo frugi*,
A pious, holy, and religious man,
One free from mortal sin, a very virgin.
Mam. That makes it, sir, he is so. But I buy it.
My venture brings it me. He, honest wretch,
A notable superstitious, good soul,
Has worn his knees bare, and his slippers bald,
With prayer and fasting for it: And, sir, let him
Do it alone, for me, still. Here he comes,
Not a prophane word afore him: 'Tis poison.

SCENE III.

MAMMON, SUBTLE, SURLY, *and* FACE.

Mam. Good-morrow, father.
Sub. Gentle son, good-morrow,
And, to your friend there. What is he, is with you?
Mam. An heretic, that I did bring along,
In hope, sir, to convert him.
Sub. Son, I doubt
You're covetous, that thus you meet your time
I' the just point; prevent your day, at morning.
This argues something worthy of a fear
Of importune, and carnal appetite.
Take heed you do not cause the blessing leave you,
With your ungovern'd haste. I should be sorry
To see my labours, now, e'en at perfection,
Got by long watching, and large patience,
Not prosper, where my love and zeal hath plac'd 'em.
Which, (Heav'n I call to witness, with yourself,
To whom I have pour'd my thoughts) in all my ends,
Have look'd no way, but unto public good,
To pious uses, and dear charity,
Now grown a prodigy with men. Wherein
If you, my son, should now prevaricate,
And to your own particular lusts, employ
So great and catholic a bliss: Be sure,
A curse will follow, yea, and overtake

Your subtle and most secret ways.
Mam. I know, sir,
You shall not need to fear me. I but come,
To ha' you confute this gentleman.
Sur. Who is,
Indeed, sir, somewhat costive of belief
Toward your stone: would not be gull'd.
Sub. Well, son,
All that I can convince him in, is this,
The work is done: Bright Sol is in his robe.
We have a med'cine of the triple soul,
The glorified spirit. Thanks be to Heav'n,
And make us worthy of it! Ulen Spiegel.
Face. Anon, sir.
Sub. Look well to the register,
And let your heat still lessen by degrees,
To the aludels.
Face. Yes, sir.
Sub. Did you look
O'the bolt's-head yet?
Face. Which? on D. sir?
Sub. Ay, what's the complexion?
Face. Whitish.
Sub. Infuse vinegar,
To draw his volatile substance, and his tincture:
And let the water in glass E. be filter'd,
And put into the gripe's egg. Lute him well;
And leave him clos'd in balneo.
Face. I will, sir.
Sur. What a brave language here is? next to canting.
Sub. I have another work, you never saw, son,
That, three days since, past the philosopher's wheel,
In the lent heat of Athanor; and become
Sulphur o' nature.
Mam. But 'tis for me.
Sub. What need you?
You have enough in that is perfect.
Mam. O, but——
Sub. Why, this is covetous!
Mam. No, I assure you.
I shall employ it all in pious uses,
Founding of colleges, and grammar-schools;
Marrying young virgins, building hospitals,
And now and then a church.
Sub. How now?
Face. Sir, please you,
Shall I not change the feltre?
Sub. Marry, yes.
And bring me the complexion of glass B.
Mam. Ha' you another?
Sub. Yes, son, were I assur'd
Your piety were firm, we would not want
The means to glorify it. But I hope the best:
I mean to tinct C. in sand-heat to-morrow,
And give him imbibition.
Mam. Of white oil?
Sub. No, sir, of red. F. is come over the helm too,
I thank my maker, in S. Mary's bath,
And shews *lac virginis*. Blessed be Heav'n!
I sent you of his faeces there, calcin'd.
Out of that calx, I ha' won the salt of mercury.
Mam. By pouring on your rectified water?
Sub. Yes, and reverberating in Athanor.
How now? What colour says it?
Face. The ground black, sir.
Mam. That's your crow's head?
Sur. Your cock's combs, is't not?
Sub. No, 'tis not perfect; would it were the crow!
That work wants something.
Sur. O, I look'd for this.
The hay is a-pitching.
Sub. Are you sure, you loos'd 'em
I' their own menstrue?
Face. Yes, sir, and then married 'em,
And put 'em in a bolt's-head, nipp'd to digestion,
According as you bade me; when I set
The liquor of Mars to circulation,
In the same heat.
Sub. The process, then, was right.
Face. Yes, by the token, sir, the retort brake,
And what was saved, was put into the pellican,
And sign'd with Hermes's seal.
Sub. I think 'twas so.
We should have a new amalgama.
Sur. O, this ferret
Is rank as any polecat.
Sub. But I care not.
Let him e'en die; we have enough beside,
In embrion. H. has his white shirt on?
Face. Yes, sir,
He's ripe for inceration: He stands warm,
In his ash-fire. I would not you should let
Any die now, if I might counsel, sir,
For luck's sake to the rest. It is not good.
Mam. He says right.
Sur. Ay, are you bolted?
Face. Nay, I know't, sir.
I have seen th' ill fortune. What is some three ounces
Of fresh materials?
Mam. Is't no more?
Face. No more, sir,
Of gold, t' amalgame with some six of mercury.
Mam. Away, here's money. What will serve?
Face. Ask him, sir.
Mam. How much?
Sub. Give him nine pound: You may gi' him ten.
Sur. Yes, twenty, and be cozen'd, do.
Mam. There 'tis.
Sub. This needs not, but that you will have it so,
To see conclusions of all. For two
Of our inferior works are at fixation;
A third is in ascension. Go your ways.
Ha' you set the oil of Luna in Kemia?
Face. Yes, sir.
Sub. And the philosopher's vinegar?
Face. Ay.
Sur. We shall have a sallad.
Mam. When do you make projection?
Sub. Son, be not hasty. I exalt our med'cine,
By hanging him in balneo vaporoso;
And giving him solution; then congeal him;

And then dissolve him; then again congeal him;
For look, how oft I iterate the work,
So many times I add unto his virtue,
As, if, at first, one ounce convert a hundred,
After his second loose, he'll turn a thousand;
His third solution, ten; his fourth, a hundred;
After his fifth, a thousand thousand ounces
Of any imperfect metal, into pure
Silver, or gold, in all examinations,
As good as any of the natural mine.
Get you your stuff here, against afternoon,
Your brass, your pewter, and your andirons.
Mam. Not those of iron?
Sub. Yes. You may bring them, too.
We'll change all metals.
Sur. I believe you in that.
Mam. Then I may send my spits?
Sub. Yes, and your racks.
Sur. And dripping-pans, and pot-hangers, and hooks?
Shall he not?
Sub. If he please.
Sur. To be an ass.
Sub. How, sir?
Mam. This gentleman you must bear withal.
I told you he had no faith.
Sur. And little hope, sir,
But much less charity, should I gull myself.
Sub. Why, what have you observ'd, sir, in our art,
Seems so impossible?
Sur. But your whole work, no more.
That you should hatch gold in a furnace, sir,
As they do eggs in Egypt!
Sub. Sir, do you
Believe that eggs are hatch'd so?
Sur. If I should?
Sub. Why, I think that the greater miracle.
No egg, but differs from a chicken, more
Than metals in themselves.
Sur. That cannot be.
The egg's ordain'd by nature to that end,
And is a chicken in potentia.
Sub. The same we say of lead, and other metals,
Which would be gold, if they had time.
Mam. And that our art doth further.
Sub. Ay, for 'twere absurd,
To think that nature, in the earth, bred gold
Perfect, i' the instant. Something went before.
There must be remote matter.
Sur. Ay, what is that?
Sub. Marry, we say—
Mam. Ay, now it heats: Stand, father.
Pound him to dust——
Sub. It is, of the one part,
A humid exhalation, which we call
Materia liquida, or the unctuous water;
On th' other part, a certain crass and viscous
Portion of earth; both which, concorporate,
Do make the elementary matter of gold:
Which is not yet *propria materia*,
But common to all metals, and all stones.
For, where it is forsaken of that moisture,
And hath more dryness, it becomes a stone;
Where it retains more of the humid fatness,
It turns to sulphur, or to quicksilver:
Who are the parents of all other metals.
Nor can this remote matter, suddenly,
Progress so from extreme unto extreme,
As to grow gold, and leap o'er all the means.
Nature doth first beget th' imperfect; then
Proceeds she to the perfect. Of that airy
And oily water, mercury is engender'd;
Sulphur, o' the fat and earthy part: The one
(Which is the last) supplying the place of male,
The other of the female, in all metals.
Some do believe hermaphrodeitie,
That both do act and suffer. But these two
Make the rest ductile, malleable, extensive,
And even in gold they are; for we do find
Seeds of them by our fire, and gold in them;
And can produce the species of each metal
More perfect thence than nature doth in earth.
Beside, who doth not see, in daily practice,
Art can beget bees, hornets, beetles, wasps,
Out of the carcasses and dung of creatures;
Yea, scorpions, of an herb, being rightly plac'd:
And these are living creatures, far more perfect,
And excellent, than metals.
Mam. Well said, father!
Nay, if he take you in hand, sir, with an argument,
He'll bray you in a mortar.
Sur. Pray you, sir, stay.
Rather than I'll be bray'd, sir, I'll believe,
That alchemy is a pretty kind of game,
Somewhat like tricks o' the cards, to cheat a man
With charming.
Sub. Sir?
Sur. What else are all your terms,
Whereon no one o' your writers 'grees with other;
Of your elixir, your lac virginis,
Your stone, your med'cine, and your chrysoperme,
Your sal, your sulphur, and your mercury,
Your oil of height, your tree of life, your blood,
Your marchesite, your tutie, your magnesia,
Your toad, your crow, your dragon, and your panther,
Your sun, your moon, your firmament, your adrop,
Your lato, azoch, zernich, chibrit, heautarit,
And then, your red man, and your white woman,
With all your broths, your menstrues, and materials,
Of piss and egg-shells, women's terms, man's blood,
Hair o' the head, burnt clouts, chalk, merds, and clay,
Powder of bones, scalings of iron, glass,
And worlds of other strange ingredients,
Would burst a man to name?
Sub. And all these, nam'd,
Intending but one thing: Which art our writers
Us'd, to obscure their art.
Mam. Sir, so I told him,
Because the simple idiot should not learn it,
And make it vulgar.
Sub. Was not all the knowledge
Of the Egyptians writ in mystic symbols?
Speak not the scriptures oft in parables?
Are not the choicest fables of the poets,

That were the fountains, and first springs of wisdom,
Wrapt in perplexed allegories?
Mam. I urg'd that,
And clear'd to him, that Sysiphus was damn'd
To roll the ceaseless stone, only, because
He would have made ours common. Who is this?
[DOL *is seen.*
Sub. God's precious——What do you mean? Go in, good lady,
Let me intreat you. Where's this varlet?
Face. Sir?
Sub. You very knave! do you use me thus?
Face. Wherein, sir?
Sub. Go in and see, you traitor, go.
Mam. Who is it, sir?
Sub. Nothing, sir, nothing.
Mam. What's the matter? Good sir!
I have not seen you thus distemper'd. Who is't?
Sub. All arts have still had, sir, their adversaries,
But ours the most ignorant. What now?
[FACE *returns.*
Face. 'Twas not my fault, sir, she would speak with you.
Sub. Would she, sir? Follow me. [*Exit.*
Mam. Stay, Lungs.
Face. I dare not, sir.
Mam. How! Pray thee stay?
Face. She's mad, sir, and sent hither——
Mam. Stay, man, what is she?
Face. A lord's sister, sir.
He'll be mad too.
Mam. I warrant thee. Why sent hither?
Face. Sir, to be cur'd.
Sub. Why, rascal!
Face. Lo you. Here, sir. [*He goes out.*
Mam. 'Fore God, a bradamante, a brave piece.
Sur. Heart, this is a bawdy-house! I'll be burnt else.
Mam. O, by this light, no. Do not wrong him. He's
Too scrupulous that way. It is his vice.
No, he's a rare physician, do him right.
An excellent Paracelsian! And has done
Strange cures with mineral physic. He deals all
With spirits, he. He will not hear a word
Of Galen, or his tedious recipes. [FACE *again.*
How now, Lungs!
Face. Softly, sir, speak softly. I meant
To ha' told your worship all. This must not hear.
Mam. No, he will not be gull'd; let him alone.
Face. You're very right, sir; she is a most rare scholar,
And is gone mad with studying Broughton's works.
If you but name a word touching the Hebrew,
She falls into her fit, and will discourse
So learnedly of genealogies,
As you would run mad too, to hear her, sir.
Mam. How might one do t' have conference with her, Lungs?
Face. O, divers have run mad upon the conference.
I do not know, sir: I'm sent in haste,
To fetch a viol.
Sur. Be not gull'd, sir Mammon.
Mam. Wherein? Pray ye be patient.
Sur. Yes, as you are,
And trust confederate knaves, and bawds, and whores.
Mam. You are too foul, believe it. Come here, Ulen.
One word.
Face. I dare not, in good faith.
Mam. Stay, knave.
Face. He's extreme angry that you saw her, sir.
Mam. Drink that. What is she, when she's out of her fit?
Face. O, the most affablest creature, sir! so merry!
So pleasant! She'll mount you up like quicksilver,
Over the helm; and circulate like oil,
A very vegetable: Discourse of state,
Of mathematics, bawdry, any thing——
Mam. Is she no way accessible? No means,
No trick to give a man a taste of her—Wit——
Or so?——Ulen.
Face. I'll come to you again, sir.
Mam. Surly, I did not think one o' your breeding
Would traduce personages of worth.
Sur. Sir Epicure,
Your friend to use: Yet, still, loth to be gull'd.
I do not like your philosophical bawds.
Their stone is lechery enough to pay for,
Without this bait.
Mam. Heart, you abuse yourself.
I know the lady, and her friends, and means,
The original of this disaster. Her brother
Has told me all.
Sur. And yet, you ne'er saw her
'Till now.
Mam. O, yes, but I forgot. I have (believe it)
One o' the treacherous'st memories, I do think,
Of all mankind.
Sur. What call you her brother?
Mam. My lord——
He will not have his name known, now I think on't.
Sur. A very treacherous memory!
Mam. O' my faith——
Sur. Tut, if you ha' it not about you, pass it,
Till we meet next.
Mam. Nay, by this hand, 'tis true.
He's one I honour, and my noble friend,
And I respect his house.
Sur. Heart! can it be,
That a grave sir, a rich, that has no need,
A wise sir, too, at other times, should thus,
With his own oaths and arguments, make hard means
To gull himself? An' this be your elixir,
Your lapis mineralis, and your lunary,
Give me your honest trick, yet, at primero,
Or gleek; and take your lutum sapientis,
Your menstruum simplex: I'll have gold before you,
And with less danger of the quicksilver;
Or the hot sulphur.
Face. Here's one from Captain Face, sir,
[*To* SURLY.

Desires you to meet him i' the Temple Church,
Some half hour hence, and upon earnest business.
Sir, if you please to quit us now, and come
[*He whispers* MAMMON.
Again within two hours; you shall have
My master busy examining o' the works;
And I will steal you in unto the party,
That you may see her converse. Sir, shall I say
You'll meet the captain's worship?
Sur. Sir, I will;
But, by attorney, and to a second purpose.
Now, I am sure, it is a bawdy-house;
I'll swear it, were the marshal here to thank me!
The naming this commander doth confirm it.
Don Face! Why, he's the most authentic dealer
I' these commodities! The superintendant
To all the quainter traffickers in town.
He is their visitor, and does appoint
Who lies with whom; and at what hour, what price,
Which gown, and in what smock; what fall, what tire.
Him will I prove, by a third person, to find
The subtilties of this dark labyrinth:
Which, if I do discover, dear sir Mammon,
You'll give your poor friend leave, though no philosopher,
To laugh: For you that are, 'tis thought, shall weep.
Face. Sir, he does pray you'll not forget.
Sur. I will not, sir.
Sir Epicure, I shall leave you.
Mam. I follow you straight.
Face. But do so, good sir, to avoid suspicion.
This gentleman has a par'lous head.
Mam. But wilt thou, Ulen,
Be constant to thy promise?
Face. As my life, sir.
Mam. And wilt thou insinuate what I am? and praise me?
And say I am a noble fellow?
Face. O, what else, sir?
And, that you'll make her royal with the stone,
An empress, and yourself king of Bantam.
Mam. Wilt thou do this?
Face. Will I, sir?
Mam. Lungs, my Lungs!
I love thee.
Face. Send your stuff, sir, that my master
May busy himself about projection.
Mam. Thou hast witch'd me, rogue: take, go.
Face. Your jack and all, sir.
Mam. Thou art a villain—I will send my jack;
And the weights too. Slave, I could bite thine ear.
Away, thou dost not care for me.
Face. Not I, sir?
Mam. Come, I was born to make thee, my good weasel;
Set thee on a bench, and ha' thee twirl a chain
With the best lord's vermin of 'em all.
Face. Away, sir.
Mam. A count, nay, a count palatine——
Face. Good sir, go.
Mam. Shall not advance thee better: No, nor faster, [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

SUBTLE, FACE, *and* DOL.

Sub. Has he bit? Has he bit?
Face. And swallow'd too, my Subtle.
I ha' giv'n him line, and now he plays, i'faith.
Sub. And shall we twitch him?
Face. Through both the gills.
A wench is a rare bait, with which a man
No sooner's taken, but he straight firks mad.
Sub. Dol, my lord Wha't'shum's sister, you must now
Bear yourself statelich.
Doll. O, let me alone.
I'll not forget my race, I warrant you.
I'll keep my distance, laugh, and talk aloud;
Have all the tricks of a proud scurvy lady,
And be as rude as her woman.
Face. Well said, Sanguine.
Sub. But will he send his andirons?
Face. His jack too;
And's iron shoeing-horn: I ha' spoke to him. Well,
I must not lose my wary gamester, yonder.
Sub. O Monsieur Caution, that will not be gull'd?
Face. Ay, if I can strike a fine hook into him, now!
The Temple-church, there I have cast mine angle.
Well, pray for me. I'll about it.
Sub. What, more gudgeons! [*One knocks.*
Doll, scout, scout; stay, Face, you must go to the door:
Pray God it be my anabaptist. Who is't, Dol?
Dol. I know him not. He looks like a Gold-end-man.
Sub. Gods so! 'tis he, he said he would send, what call you him?
The sanctified elder, that should deal
For Mammon's jack and andirons! Let him in.
Stay, help me off first with my gown. Away,
Madam, to your withdrawing-chamber. Now,
In a new tune, new gesture, but old language.
This fellow is sent from one negotiates with me
About the stone too; for the holy brethren
Of Amsterdam, the exil'd saints; that hope
To raise their discipline by it. I must use him
In some strange fashion now, to make him admire me.

SCENE V.

SUBTLE, FACE, *and* ANANIAS.

Sub. Where is my drudge?
Face. Sir.
Sub. Take away the recipient,
And rectify your menstrue, from the phlegma.
Then pour it, o' the Sol, in the cucurbite,
And let 'em macerate together.
Face. Yes, sir.
And save the ground?
Sub. No. Terra damnata
Must not have entrance in the work. Who are you?
Ana. A faithful brother, if it please you.
Sub. What's that?

A Lullianist? a Ripley? filius artis?
Can you sublime, and dulcify? calcine?
Know you the sapor pontic? sapor stiptic?
Or, what is homogene, or heterogene?
Ana. I understand no Heathen language, truly.
Sub. Heathen, you knipper-doling! Is ars sacra,
Or chrysopœia, or spagirica,
Or the pamphysic, or panarchic knowledge,
A Heathen language?
Ana. Heathen Greek, I take it.
Sub. How? Heathen Greek?
Ana. All's Heathen, but the Hebrew.
Sub. Sirrah, my varlet, stand you forth and speak to him
Like a philosopher: Answer, i' the language.
Name the vexations, and the martyrizations
Of metals in the work.
Face. Sir, putrefaction,
Solution, ablution, sublimation,
Cohobation, calcination, ceration, and
Fixation.
Sub. This is Heathen Greek to you, now?
And when comes vivification?
Face. After mortification.
Sub. What's cohobation?
Face. 'Tis the pouring on
Your aqua regis, and then drawing him off,
To the trine circle of the seven spheres.
Sub. What's the proper passion of metals?
Face. Malleation.
Sub. What's your ultimum supplicium auri?
Face. Antimonium.
Sub. This's Heathen Greek to you?
And, what's your mercury?
Face. A very fugitive, he will be gone, sir.
Sub. How know you him?
Face. By his viscosity,
His oleosity, and his suscitability.
Sub. How do you sublime him?
Face. With the calce of egg-shells,
White marble, talek.
Sub. Your magisterium, now?
What's that?
Face. Shifting, sir, your elements,
Dry into cold, cold into moist, moist into hot,
Hot into dry.
Sub. This's Heathen Greek to you, still?
Your lapis philosophicus?
Face. 'Tis a stone, and not
A stone; a spirit, a soul, and a body:
Which, if you do dissolve, it is dissolv'd,
If you coagulate, it is coagulated,
If you make it to fly, it flieth.
Sub. Enough.
This's Heathen Greek to you? What are you, sir?
Ana. Please you, a servant of the exil'd brethren,
That deal with widows' and with orphans' goods;
And make a just account unto the saints:
A deacon.
Sub. O, you are sent from master Wholesome,
Your teacher?
Ana. From Tribulation Wholesome,
Our very zealous pastor.
Sub. Good. I have
Some orphan's goods to come here.
Ana. Of what kind, sir?
Sub. Pewter and brass, andirons, and kitchen-ware,
Metals, that we must use our med'cine on:
Wherein the brethren may have a pen'worth,
For ready money.
Ana. Were the orphan's parents
Sincere professors?
Sub. Why do you ask?
Ana. Because
We then are to deal justly, and give, in truth,
Their utmost value.
Sub. 'Slid, you would cozen else,
And if their parents were not of the faithful?
I will not trust you, now I think on't,
Till I ha' talk'd with your pastor. Ha' you brought money
To buy more coals?
Ana. No, surely.
Sub. No? How so?
Ana. The brethren bid me say unto you, sir,
Surely, they will not venture any more,
Till they may see projection.
Sub. How!
Ana. You've had,
For the instruments, as bricks, and lome, and glasses,
Already thirty pound; and, for materials,
They say, some ninety more: And, they have heard since,
That one, at Heidelberg, made it of an egg,
And a small paper of pin-dust.
Sub. What's your name?
Ana. My name is Ananias.
Sub. Out, the varlet
That cozen'd the apostles! Hence, away,
Flee mischief: Had your holy consistory
No name to send me, of another sound,
Than wicked Ananias? Send your elders
Hither, to make atonement for you, quickly,
And gi' me satisfaction; or, out goes
The fire; and down th' alembecs, and the furnace,
Piger Henricus, or what not. Thou wretch,
Both Sericon and Bufo shall be lost,
Tell 'em. All hope of rooting out the bishops,
Or th' antichristian hierarchy, shall perish,
If they stay threescore minutes. The aqueitie,
Terreitie, and sulphureitie
Shall run together again, and all be annull'd,
Thou wicked Ananias.—This will fetch 'em,
[*Exit* ANANIAS.
And make 'em haste towards their gulling more.
A man must deal like a rough nurse, and fright
Those, that are froward, to an appetite.

SCENE VI.

FACE, SUBTLE, *and* DRUGGER.

Face. He's busy with his spirits, but we'll upon him.
Sub. How now! What mates? What baiards ha' we here!

Face. I told you, he would be furious. Sir, here's Nab,
Has brought you another piece of gold to look on:
(We must appease him. Give it me.) and prays you,
You would devise (what is it, Nab?)
Drug. A sign, sir.
Face. Ay, a good lucky one, a thriving sign, doctor.
Sub. I was devising now.
Face. 'Sight, do not say so,
He will repent he ga' you any more.
What say you to his constellation, doctor?
The balance?
Sub. No, that way is stale and common.
A town's-man, born in Taurus, gives the bull;
Or the bull's head: In Aries, the ram.
A poor device. No, I will have his name
Form'd in some mystic character; whose radii,
Striking the senses of the passers-by,
Shall, by a virtual influence, breed affections,
That may result upon the party owns it:
As thus——
Face. Nab!
Sub. He first shall have a bell, that's Abel;
And by it, standing one whose name is Dee,
In a rug-gown; there's D. and rug, that's drug:
And, right anenst him, a dog snarling Er;
There's Drugger, Abel Drugger. That's his sign.
And here's now mystery, and hieroglyphic!
Face. Abel, thou art made.
Drug. Sir, I do thank his worship.
Face. Six o' thy legs more will not do it, Nab.
He has brought you a pipe of tobacco, doctor.
Drug. Yes, sir:
I have another thing I would impart——
Face. Out with it, Nab.
Drug. Sir, there is lodg'd, hard by me,
A rich young widow——
Face. Good! A bona roba?
Drug. But nineteen, at the most.
Face. Very good, Abel.
Drug. Marry, she's not in fashion yet; she wears
A hood: but 't stands a-cop.
Face. No matter, Abel.
Drug. And I do now and then give her a fucus——
Face. What! dost thou deal, Nab?
Sub. I did tell you, captain.
Drug. And physic too sometimes, sir: For which she trusts me
With all her mind. She's come up here of purpose
To learn the fashion.
Face. Good, (his match too!) on, Nab.
Drug. And she does strangely long to know her fortune.
Face. Gods-lid, Nab, send her to the doctor, hither.
Drug. Yes, I have spoke to her of his worship, already:
But she's afraid it will be blown abroad,
And hurt her marriage.
Face. Hurt it? 'Tis the way
To heal it, if 'twere hurt; to make it more
Follow'd, and sought: Nab, thou shalt tell her this.
She'll be more known, more talk'd of, and your widows
Are ne'er of any price 'till they be famous;
Their honour is their multitude of suitors:
Send her, it may be thy good fortune. What?
Thou dost not know.
Drug. No, sir, she'll never marry
Under a knight. Her brother has made a vow.
Face. What, and dost thou despair, my little Nab,
Knowing what the doctor has set down for thee,
And seeing so many o' the city dubb'd?
One glass o' thy water, with a madam, I know,
Will have it done, Nab. What's her brother, a knight?
Drug. No, sir, a gentleman, newly warm in his land, sir,
Scarce cold in his one-and-twenty; that does govern
His sister, here; and is a man himself,
Of some three thousand a-year, and is come up
To learn to quarrel, and to live by his wits,
And will go down again, and die i' the country.
Face. How! to quarrel!
Drug. Yes, sir, to carry quarrels,
As gallants do, and manage 'em by line.
Face. 'Slid, Nab! The doctor is the only man
In Christendom for him. He has made a table,
With mathematical demonstrations,
Touching the art of quarrels. He will give him
An instrument to quarrel by. Go, bring 'em both:
Him and his sister. And, for thee, with her
The doctor happ'ly may persuade. Go to.
'Shalt give his worship a new damask suit
Upon the premises.
Sub. O, good captain.
Face. He shall,
He is the honestest fellow, doctor. Stay not,
No offers, bring the damask, and the parties.
Drug. I'll try my power, sir.
Face. And thy will too, Nab.
Sub. 'Tis good tobacco this! What is't an ounce?
Face. He'll send you a pound, doctor.
Sub. O, no.
Face. He will do it.
It is the goodest soul! Abel, about it.
(Thou shalt know more anon. Away, be gone.)
[*Exit* DRUG.
A miserable rogue, and lives with cheese,
And has the worms. That was the cause indeed
Why he came now. He dealt with me in private,
To get a med'cine for 'em.
Sub. And shall, sir. This works.
Face. A wife, a wife, for one of us, my dear Subtle:
We'll e'en draw lots, and he that fails shall have
The more in goods, the other has in tail.
Sub. Rather the less. For she may be so light
She may want grains.
Face. Ay, or be such a burden,
A man could scarce endure her for the whole.

Sub. Faith, best let's see her first, and then determine.
Face. Content. But Dol must ha' no breath on't.

Sub. Mum.
Away, you to your Surly yonder, catch him.
Face. Pray God, I ha' not staid too long.
Sub. I fear it. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter TRIBULATION *and* ANANIAS.

Trib. These chastisements are common to the saints,
And such rebukes we of the separation
Must bear with willing shoulders, as the trials
Sent forth to tempt our frailties.
Ana. In pure zeal,
I do not like the man: he is a heathen,
And speaks the language of Canaan truly.
Trib. I think him a profane person indeed.
Ana. He bears
The visible mark of the beast in his forehead;
And for his stone, it is a work of darkness,
And, with philosophy, blinds the eyes of man.
Trib. Good brother, we must bend unto all means
That may give furtherance to the holy cause.
Ana. Which his cannot: the sanctified cause
Should have a sanctified course.
Trib. Not always necessary.
The children of perdition are oft-times
Made instruments, even of the greatest works.
Beside, we should give somewhat to man's nature,
The place he lives in, still about the fire,
And fume of metals, that intoxicate
The brain of man, and make him prone to passion.
Where have you greater atheists than your cooks?
Or more profane, or choleric, than your glass-men?
More antichristian than your bell-founders?
What makes the devil so devilish, I would ask you,
Satan, our common enemy, but his being
Perpetually about the fire, and boiling
Brimstone and arsenic? We must give, I say,
Unto the motives, and the stirrers up
Of humours in the blood. It may be so,
When as the work is done, the stone is made,
This heat of his may turn into a zeal,
And stand up for the beauteous discipline,
Against the menstruous cloth and rag of Rome.
We must await his calling, and the coming
Of the good spirit. You did fault, t' upbraid him
With the brethren's blessing of Heidelberg, weighing
What need we have to hasten on the work
For the restoring of the silenced saints,
Which ne'er will be, but by the philosopher's stone.
And so a learned elder, one of Scotland,
Assured me; *aurum potabile* being
The only med'cine for the civil magistrate,
T' incline him to a feeling of the cause:
And must be daily used in the disease.
Ana. I have not edified more, truly, by man;
Not, since the beautiful light first shone on me:
And I am sad my zeal hath so offended.
Trib. Let us call on him then.
Ana. The motion's good,
And of the spirit; I will knock first: peace be within.

SCENE II.

SUBTLE, TRIBULATION, *and* ANANIAS.

Sub. O, are you come? 'Twas time. Your threescore minutes
Were at the last thread, you see; and down had gone
Furnus acediæ, turris circulatorius:
Lembec, bolt's-head, retort, and pellicane,
Had all been cinders. Wicked Ananias!
Art thou returned? Nay, then, it goes down yet.
Trib. Sir, be appeased; he is come to humble
Himself in spirit, and to ask your patience,
If too much zeal hath carried him aside
From the due path.
Sub. Why, this doth qualify!
Trib. The brethren had no purpose, verily,
To give you the least grievance; but are ready
To lend their willing hands to any project
The spirit and you direct.
Sub. This qualifies more!
Trib. And for the orphan's goods, let them be valued,
Or what is needful else to the holy work,
It shall be numbered: here, by me, the saints
Throw down their purse before you.
Sub. This qualifies most!
Why, thus it should be, now you understand.
Have I discoursed so unto you of our stone,
And of the good that it shall bring your cause?
Shewed you, (beside the main of hiring forces
Abroad, drawing the Hollanders, your friends,
From th' Indies, to serve you with all their fleet)
That even the med'cinal use shall make you a faction
And party in the realm? As, put the case,
That some great man in state, he have the gout,
Why, you but send three drops of your elixir,
You help him straight: there you have made a friend.
Another has the palsy, or the dropsy,
He takes of your incombustible stuff,
He's young again: there you have made a friend.
A lady that is past the feat of body,
Though not of mind, and hath her face decayed
Beyond all cure of paintings, you restore

With the oil of talek: there you have made a friend,
And all her friends. A lord that is a leper,
A knight that has the bone-ache, or a squire
That hath both these, you make 'em smooth and sound
With a bare fricace of your med'cine: still
You increase your friends.
Trib. Ay, 'tis very pregnant.
Sub. And then the turning of this lawyer's pewter
To plate at Christmas—
Ana. Christ-tide, I pray you.
Sub. Yet, Ananias?
Ana. I have done.
Sub. Or changing
His parcel gilt to massy gold. You cannot
But raise your friends. Withal, to be of power
To pay an army in the field, to buy
The king of France out of his realms, or Spain
Out of his Indies. What can you not do
Against lords spiritual or temporal,
That shall oppone you?
Trib. Verily, 'tis true.
We may be temporal lords ourselves, I take it.
Sub. You may be any thing, and leave off to make
Long-winded exercises, or suck up
Your ha and hum in a tune. I not deny,
But such as are not graced in a state,
May, for their ends, be adverse in religion,
And get a tune to call the flock together;
For, to say sooth, a tune does much with women;
And other phlegmatic people, it is your bell.
Ana. Bells are profane; a tune may be religious.
Sub. No warning with you? Then farewell my patience.
'Slight, it shall down: I will not be thus tortured.
Trib. I pray you, sir.
Sub. All shall perish. I have spoke it.
Trib. Let me find grace, sir, in your eyes; the man
He stands corrected: neither did his zeal
(But as yourself) allow a tune, somewhere,
Which now, being tow'rd the stone, we shall not need.
Sub. No, nor your holy vizard, to win widows
To give you legacies; or make zealous wives
To rob their husbands for the common cause:
Nor take the start of bonds, broke but one day,
And say, they were forfeited by Providence.
Nor shall you need o'er night to eat huge meals,
To celebrate your next day's fast the better:
The whilst the brethren and the sisters, humbled,
Abate the stiffness of the flesh. Nor cast
Before your hungry hearers scrupulous bones,
As whether a Christian may hawk or hunt;
Or whether matrons of the holy assembly
May lay their hair out, or wear doublets;
Or have that idol starch about their linen.
Ana. It is, indeed, an idol.
Trib. Mind him not, sir.
I do command thee, spirit (of zeal, but trouble)
To peace within him. Pray you, sir, go on.
Sub. Nor shall you need to libel 'gainst the prelates,
And shorten so your ears against the hearing
Of the next wire-drawn grace. Nor, of necessity,
Rail against plays to please the alderman,
Whose daily custard you devour. Nor lie
With zealous rage, till you are hoarse. Not one
Of these so singular arts. Nor call yourselves
By names of Tribulation, Persecution,
Restraint, Long-patience, and such like, affected
By the whole family or wood of you,
Only for glory, and to catch the ear
Of the disciple.
Trib. Truly, sir, they are
Ways that the godly brethren have invented
For propagation of the glorious cause,
As very notable means, and whereby, also,
Themselves grow soon and profitably famous.
Sub. O, but the stone; all's idle to it! nothing!
The art of angels, nature's miracle,
The divine secret, that doth fly in clouds
From east to west; and whose tradition
Is not from men, but spirits.
Ana. I hate traditions:
I do not trust them—
Trib. Peace.
Ana. They are popish all.
I will not peace. I will not—
Trib. Ananias.
Ana. Please the profane, to grieve the godly: I may not.
Sub. Well, Ananias, thou shalt overcome.
Trib. It is an ignorant zeal that haunts him, sir.
But truly, else, a very faithful brother,
A botcher; and a man, by revelation,
That hath a competent knowledge of the truth.
Sub. Has he a competent sum there, i' the bag,
To buy the goods within? I am made guardian,
And must, for charity and conscience' sake,
Now see the most be made for my poor orphan;
Though I desire the brethren, too, good gainers.
There they are, within. When you have viewed, and bought 'em,
And ta'en the inventory of what they are,
They are ready for projection; there's no more
To do: cast on the med'cine, so much silver
As there is tin there, so much gold as brass,
I'll gi'it you in by weight.
Trib. But how long time,
Sir, must the saints expect yet?
Sub. Let me see,
How's the moon now? Eight, nine, ten days hence,
He will be silver potate; then, three days
Before he citronise: some fifteen days,
The *magisterium* will be perfected.
Ana. About the second day of the third week,
In the ninth month?
Sub. Yes, my good Ananias.
Trib. What will the orphan's goods arise to, think you?
Sub. Some hundred marks; as much as filled three cars,
Unladed now: you'll make six millions of 'em.
But I must ha' more coals laid in.

Trib. How!
Sub. Another load,
And then we ha' finished. We must now increase
Our fire to *ignis ardens*, we are past
Fimus equinus, balnei, cineris,
And all those lenter heats. If the holy purse
Should with this draught fall low, and that the saints
Do need a present sum, I have a trick
To melt the pewter you shall buy now, instantly,
And, with a tincture, make you as good Dutch dollars
As any are in Holland.
Trib. Can you so?
Sub. Ay, and shall bide the third examination.
Ana. It will be joyful tidings to the brethren.
Sub. But you must carry it secret.
Trib. Ay, but stay,
This act of coining, is it lawful?
Ana. Lawful?
We know no magistrate. Or, if we did,
This's foreign coin.
Sub. It is no coining, sir,
It is but casting.
Trib. Ha? you distinguish well.
Casting of money may be lawful.
Ana. 'Tis, sir.
Trib. Truly, I take it so.
Sub. There is no scruple,
Sir, to be made of it; believe Ananias:
This case of conscience he is studied in.
Trib. I'll make a question of it to the brethren.
Ana. The brethren shall approve it lawful, doubt not.
Where shal't be done?
Sub. For that, we'll talk anon.
There's some to speak with me. Go in, I pray you, [*Knock without.*
And view the parcels. That's the inventory.
I'll come to you straight. Who is it? Face! Appear.

SCENE III.

SUBTLE, FACE, *and* DOL.

Sub. How now? Good prize?
Face. Good pox! Yon caustive cheater
Never came on.
Sub. How then?
Face. I ha' walked the round
'Till now, and no such thing.
Sub. And ha' you quit him?
Face. Quit him? and hell would quit him too, he were happy.
'Slight, would you have me stalk like a mill-jade
All day, for one that will not yield us grains?
I know him of old.
Sub. O, but to ha' gulled him,
Had been a mast'ry!
Face. Let him go, black boy,
And turn thee, that some fresh news may possess thee.
A noble count, a don of Spain, (my dear
Delicious compeer, and my party-bawd)
Who is come hither, private, for his conscience,
And brought munition with him, six great sloops,
Bigger than three Dutch hoighs, beside round trunks,
Furnished with pistoles and pieces of eight,
Will straight be here, my rogue, to have thy bath
(That is the colour) and to make his batt'ry
Upon our Dol, our castle, our cinque-port,
Our Dover-pier, or what thou wilt. Where is she?
She must prepare perfumes, delicate linen,
The bath in chief, a banquet, and her wit,
For she must milk his *epididimis*.
Where is the doxy?
Sub. I'll send her to thee:
And but dispatch my brace of little John Leydens,
And come again myself.
Face. Are they within, then?
Sub. Numb'ring the sum.
Face. How much?
Sub. A hundred marks, boy.
Face. Why, this's a lucky day! Ten pounds of Mammon!
Three o' my clerk! a portague o' my grocer!
This o' the brethren! beside reversions,
And states, to come i' the widow and my count!
My share to-day will not be bought for forty—
Dol. What?
Face. Pounds, dainty Dorothy, art thou so near?
Dol. Yes; say, lord general, how fares our camp?
Face. As with the few that had entrenched themselves
Safe, by their discipline, against a world, Dol;
And laughed within those trenches, and grew fat
With thinking on the booties, Dol, brought in
Daily, by their small parties. This dear hour
A doughty don is taken with my Dol,
And thou may'st make his ransom what thou wilt,
My Dousabel: he shall be brought here, fettered
With thy fair looks before he sees thee, and thrown
In a down-bed, as dark as any dungeon,
Where thou shalt keep him waking with thy drum,
Thy drum, my Dol, thy drum, 'till he be tame
As the poor blackbirds were i' the great frost,
Or bees are with a bason; and so hive him
I' the swan-skin coverlid and cambric sheets,
'Till he work honey and wax, my little god's-gift.
Dol. What is he, general?
Face. An adalantado,
A grandee, girl. Was not my Dapper here yet?
Dol. No.
Face. Nor my Drugger?
Dol. Neither.
Face. A pox on 'em,
They are so long a furnishing! such stinkards
Would not be seen upon these festival days.
How now! ha' you done?
Sub. Done: they are gone; the sum
Is here in bank, my Face. I would we knew
Another chapman, now, would buy 'em outright.
Face. 'Slid, Nab shall do't, against he ha' the widow,
To furnish household.
Sub. Excellent, well thought on!
Pray God he come.

Face. I pray he keep away,
Till our new business be o'erpast.
Sub. But, Face,
How cam'st thou by this secret don?
Face. A spirit
Brought me the intelligence in a paper here,
As I was conjuring yonder in my circle
For Surly: I ha' my flies abroad. Your earth
Is famous, Subtle, by my means. Sweet Dol,
You must go tune your virginal, no losing
O' the least time. And, do you hear? good action.
Firk like a flounder, kiss like a scollop, close,
And tickle him with thy mother tongue. His great
Verdugo-ship has not a jot of language;
So much the easier to be cozen'd; my Dolly,
He will come here, in a hired coach, obscure,
And our own coachman, whom I have sent as guide,
No creature else. Who's that?
Sub. It is not he? [*One knocks.*
Face. O no, not yet this hour.
Sub. Who is't?
Dol. Dapper, your clerk.
Face. God's will, then, queen of Fairy,
On with your tyre; and, doctor, with your robes.
Let's dispatch him, for God's sake.
Sub. 'I will be long.
Face. I warrant you, take but the cues I give you,
It shall be brief enough. 'Slight, here are more!
Abel, and, I think, the angry boy, the heir,
That fain would quarrel.
Sub. And the widow?
Face. No,
Not that I see. Away. O sir, you are welcome.

SCENE IV.

FACE, DAPPER, DRUGGER, *and* KASTRIL.

The doctor is within, a moving for you;
(I have had the most ado to win him to it)
He swears, you'll be the darling o' the dice:
He never heard her highness dote 'till now, he says.
Your aunt has giv'n you the most gracious words
That can be thought on.
Dap. Shall I see her grace?
Face. See her, and kiss her too. What? honest Nab!
Hast brought the damask?
Nab. No, sir, here's tobacco.
Face. 'Tis well done, Nab: thou'lt bring the damask too?
Drug. Yes. Here's the gentleman, captain, Master Kastril,
I have brought to see the doctor.
Face. Where's the widow?
Drug. Sir, as he likes, his sister, he says, shall come.
Face. O, is it so? good time. Is your name Kastril, sir?
Kast. Ay, and the best o' the Kastrils, I'd be sorry else,
By fifteen hundred a year. Where is this doctor?
My mad tobacco-boy, here, tells me of one
That can do things. Has he any skill?
Face. Wherein, sir?
Kast. To carry a business, manage a quarrel fairly,
Upon fit terms.
Face. It seems, sir, you're but young
About the town, that can make that a question!
Kast. Sir, not so young, but I have heard some speech
Of the angry boys, and seen 'em take tobacco;
And in his shop: and I can take it too
And I would fain be one of 'em, and go down
And practise i' the country.
Face. Sir, for the duello,
The doctor, I assure you, shall inform you,
To the least shadow of a hair; and shew you
An instrument he has, of his own making,
Wherewith no sooner shall you make report
Of any quarrel, but he will take the height on't
Most instantly; and tell in what degree
Of safety it lies in, or mortality;
And, how it may be borne, whether in a right line,
Or a half circle; or may, else, be cast
Into an angle-blunt, if not acute:
All this he will demonstrate. And then rules,
To give, and take the lie by.
Kast. How? to take it?
Face. Yes, in oblique, he'll shew you; or in circle:
But never in diameter. The whole town
Study his theorems, and dispute them, ordinarily,
At the eating academies.
Kast. But, does he teach
Living by the wits too?
Face. Any thing whatever.
You cannot think that subtilty, but he reads it.
He made me a captain. I was a stark pimp,
Just o' your standing, 'fore I met with him:
It is not two months since. I'll tell you his method:
First, he will enter you at some ordinary.
Kast. No, I'll not come there. You shall pardon me.
Face. For why, sir?
Kast. There's gaming there, and tricks.
Face. Why, would you be
A gallant, and not game?
Kast. Ay, 'twill spend a man.
Face. Spend you? It will repair you when you are spent.
How do they live by their wits, there, that have vented
Six times your fortunes?
Kast. What, three thousand a year!
Face. Ay, forty thousand.
Kast. Are there such?
Face. Ay, sir,
And gallants yet. Here's a young gentleman
Is born to nothing, forty marks a year,
Which I count nothing. He's to be initiated,
And have a fly o' the doctor. He will win you
By unresistible luck, within this fortnight,

Enough to buy a barony. They will set him
Upmost, at the groom-porter's, all the Christmas!
And, for the whole year through, at every place,
Where there is play, present him with the chair;
The best attendance, the best drink, sometimes
Two glasses of Canary, and pay nothing;
The purest linen, and the sharpest knife,
The partridge next his trencher: and, somewhere,
The dainty bed, in private, with the dainty.
You shall ha' your ordinaries bid for him,
As play-houses for a poet; and the master
Pray him, aloud, to name what dish he affects,
Which must be butter'd shrimps: And those that drink
To no mouth else, will drink to his, as being
The goodly, president mouth of all the board.
Kast. Do you not gull one?
Face. Odds my life! Do you think it?
You shall have a cast-commander, (can but get
In credit with a glover, or a spurrier,
For some two pair, of either's ware, aforehand)
Will, by most swift posts, dealing with him,
Arrive at competent means, to keep himself,
His punk, and naked boy, in excellent fashion,
And be admir'd for't.
Kast. Will the doctor teach this?
Face. He will do more, sir; when your land is gone,
(As men of spirit hate to keep earth long)
In a vacation, when small money is stirring,
And ordinaries suspended 'till the term,
He'll shew a perspective, where, on one side,
You shall behold the faces and the persons
Of all sufficient young heirs in town,
Whose bonds are current for commodity;
On th' other side, the merchant's forms, and others,
That, without help of any second broker,
Who would expect a share, will trust such parcels:
In the third square, the very street and sign
Where the commodity dwells, and does but wait
To be deliver'd, be it pepper, soap,
Hops, or tobacco, oatmeal, wood, or cheeses.
All which you may so handle, to enjoy,
To your own use, and never stand obliged.
Kast. I'faith! Is he such a fellow?
Face. Why, Nab here knows him.
And then for matches, for rich widows,
Young gentlewomen, heirs, the fortunat'st man!
He's sent to far and near, all over England,
To have his counsel, and to know their fortunes.
Kast. God's will, my sister shall see him.
Face. I'll tell you, sir,
What he did tell me of Nab. It's a strange thing!
(By the way you must eat no cheese, Nab, it breeds melancholy:
And that same melancholy breeds worms) but pass it,
He told me, honest Nab, here, was ne'er at tavern,
But once in's life!
Drug. Truth, and no more I was not,
Face. And then he was so sick——
Drug. Could he tell you that too?
Face. How should I know it?
Drug. In troth we had been a shooting,
And had a piece of fat ram-mutton to supper,
That lay so heavy o' my stomach——
Face. And he has no head
To bear any wine; for, what with the noise o' the fidlers,
And care of his shop, for he dares keep no servants——
Drug. My head did so ache——
Face. As he was fain to be brought home,
The doctor told me. And then, a good old woman——
Drug. (Yes, faith, she dwells in Sea-coal-lane) did cure me,
With sodden ale, and pellitory o' the wall:
Cost me but twopence. I had another sickness
Was worse than that.
Face. Ay, that was with the grief
Thou took'st for being sess'd at eighteen-pence,
For the water-work.
Drug. In truth, and it was like
T' have cost me almost my life.
Face. Thy hair went off?
Drug. Yes, sir, 'twas done for spite.
Face. Nay, so says the doctor.
Kast. Pray thee, tobacco-boy, go fetch my sister,
I'll see this learn'd boy before I go:
And so shall she.
Face. Sir, he is busy now:
But, if you have a sister to fetch hither,
Perhaps, your own pains may command her sooner;
And he, by that time, will be free.
Kast. I go.
Face. Drugger, she's thine: the damask. (Subtle and I
Must wrestle for her.) Come on, Master Dapper.
You see how I turn clients here away,
To give your cause dispatch. Ha' you perform'd
The ceremonies were enjoin'd you?
Dap. Yes, o' the vinegar,
And the clean shirt.
Face. 'Tis well: that shirt may do you
More worship than you think. Your aunt's afire,
But that she will not shew it, t' have a sight on you.
Ha' you provided for her grace's servants?
Dap. Yes, here are six score Edward's shillings.
Face. Good.
Dap. And an old Harry's sovereign.
Face. Very good.
Dap. And three James's shillings, and an Elizabeth's groat,
Just twenty nobles.
Face. O, you are too just.
I would you had had the other noble in Mary's.
Dap. I have some Philip and Mary's.
Face. Ay, those same
Are best of all. Where are they? Hark, the doctor.

SCENE V.

SUBTLE, *disguised like a Priest of Fairy*—FACE, DAPPER, *and* DOL.

Sub. Is yet her grace's cousin come?
Face. He is come.
Sub. And is he fasting?
Face. Yes.
Sub. And hath cried, hum?
Face. Thrice, you must answer.
Dap. Thrice.
Sub. And as oft, buz?
Face. If you have, say.
Dap. I have.
Sub. Then, to her coz,
Hoping that he hath vinegar'd his senses,
As he was bid, the fairy queen dispenses,
By me, this robe, the petticoat of fortune;
Which that he straight put on, she doth importune.
And though to fortune near be her petticoat,
Yet, nearer is her smock, the queen doth note:
And, therefore, even of that a piece she hath sent,
Which, being a child, to wrap him in, was rent;
And prays him, for a scarf, he now will wear it
(With as much love, as then her grace did tear it)
About his eyes, to shew he is fortunate.
[*They blind him with a rag.*
And, trusting unto her to make his state,
He'll throw away all worldly pelf about him;
Which that he will perform, she doth not doubt him.
Face. She need not doubt him, sir. Alas, he has nothing,
But what he will part withal, as willingly,
Upon her grace's word (throw away your purse)
As she would ask it: (handkerchiefs and all)
She cannot bid that thing, but he'll obey.
If you have a ring about you, cast it off,
Or a silver seal at your wrist; her grace will send
{*He throws away, as they bid him.*
Her fairies here to search you, therefore deal
Directly with her highness. If they find
That you conceal a mite, you are undone.
Dap. Truly, there's all.
Face. All what!
Dap. My money, truly.
Face. Keep nothing that is transitory about you.
Bid Dol play music. Look, the elves are come
[DOL *enters with a cittern: they pinch him.*
To pinch you, if you tell not truth. Advise you.
Dap. O, I have a paper with a spur-royal in't.
Face. Ti, ti,
They knew't, they say.
Sub. Ti, ti, ti, ti, he has more yet.
Face. Ti, ti-ti-ti. I' the t'other pocket?
Sub. Titi, titi, titi, titi.
They must pinch him, or he will never confess, they say.
Dap. O, O!
Face. Nay, pray you hold. He is her grace's nephew.
Ti, ti, ti! What care you? Good faith, you shall care.
Deal plainly, sir, and shame the fairies. Shew
You are an innocent.
Dap. By this good light, I ha' nothing.
Sub. Ti, ti, ti ti, to ta. He does equivocate, she says:
Ti, ti do ti, ti ti do, ti da. And swears by the light, when he is blinded.
Dap. By this good dark, I ha' nothing but a half-crown
Of gold, about my wrist, that my love gave me;
And a leaden heart I wore, sin' she forsook me.
Face. I thought 'twas something. And would you incur
Your aunt's displeasure for these trifles? Come,
I had rather you had thrown away twenty half-crowns.
You may wear your leaden heart still. How now?
Sub. What news, Dol?
Dol. Yonder's your knight, Sir Mammon.
Face. Gods-lid, we never thought of him, till now!
Where is he?
Dol. Here, hard by. He's at the door.
Sub. And you are not ready now? Dol, get his suit.
He must not be sent back.
Face. O, by no means.
What shall we do with this same puffin here,
Now he's o' the spit?
Sub. Why, lay him back a while,
With some device. Ti, ti, ti, ti ti ti. Would her grace speak with me?
I come. Help, Dol.
Face. Who's there, Sir Epicure?
[*He speaks through the key-hole, the other knocking.*
My master's i' the way. Please you to walk
Three or four turns, but till his back be turn'd,
And I am for you. Quickly, Dol.
Sub. Her grace
Commends her kindly to you, Master Dapper.
Dap. I long to see her grace.
Sub. She now is set
At dinner, in her bed; and she has sent you,
From her own private trencher, a dead mouse,
And a piece of gingerbread, to be merry withal,
And stay your stomach, lest you faint with fasting:
Yet, if you could hold out, till she saw you, she says,
It would be better for you.
Face. Sir, he shall
Hold out, and 'twere this two hours, for her highness;
I can assure you that. We will not lose
All we ha' done——
Sub. He must not see, nor speak
To any body, till then.
Face. For that, we'll put, sir,
A stay in's mouth.
Sub. Of what?
Face. Of gingerbread,
Make you it fit. He that hath pleased her grace
Thus far, shall not now crinkle for a little.
Gape, sir, and let him fit you.
Sub. Where shall we now
Bestow him?

Dol. I' the privy.
Sub. Come along, sir,
I now must shew you fortune's privy lodgings.
Face. Are they perfumed? and his bath ready?
Sub. All;
Only the fumigation's somewhat strong.
Face. Sir Epicure, I am yours, sir, by and by.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

FACE, MAMMON, *and* DOL.

Face. O, sir, you are come i' the only finest time——
Mam. Where's master?
Face. Now preparing for projection, sir.
Your stuff will all be changed shortly.
Mam. Into gold!
Face. To gold and silver, sir.
Mam. Silver I care not for.
Face. Yes, sir, a little to give beggars.
Mam. Where's the lady?
Face. At hand, here. I ha' told her such brave things o' you,
Touching your bounty and your noble spirit——
Mam. Hast thou?
Face. As she is almost in her fit to see you.
But, good sir, no divinity i' your conference,
For fear of putting her in rage——
Mam. I warrant thee.
Face. Six men will not hold her down. And then
If the old man should hear, or see you——
Mam. Fear not.
Face. The very house, sir, would run mad.
You know it,
How scrupulous he is, and violent,
'Gainst the least act of sin. Physic, or mathematics,
Poetry, state, or bawdry, as I told you,
She will endure, and never startle: But
No word of controversy.
Mam. I am schooled, good Ulen.
Face. And you must praise her house, remember that,
And her nobility.
Mam. Let me alone:
No herald, no, nor antiquary, Lungs,
Shall do it better. Go.
Face. Why, this is yet
A kind of modern happiness, to have
Dol Common for a great lady. [*Aside.*
Mam. Now, Epicure,
Heighten thyself, talk to her all in gold;
Rain her as many showers, as Jove did drops
Unto his Danae: shew the god a miser,
Compared with Mammon. What? the stone will do't.
She shall feel gold, taste gold, hear gold, sleep gold:
Nay, we will concumbere gold. I will be puissant,
And mighty in my talk to her! Here she comes.
Face. To him, Dol, suckle him. This is the noble knight,
I told your ladyship——
Mam. Madam, with your pardon,
I kiss your vesture.
Dol. Sir, I were uncivil
If I would suffer that; my lip to you, sir.
Mam. I hope my lord your brother be in health, lady?
Dol. My lord my brother is, though I no lady, sir.
Face. Well said, my Guinea-bird.
Mam. Right noble madam——
Face. O, we shall have most fierce idolatry!
Mam. 'Tis your prerogative.
Dol. Rather your courtesy.
Mam. Were there nought else t' enlarge your virtues to me,
These answers speak your breeding and your blood.
Dol. Blood, we boast none, sir; a poor baron's daughter.
Mam. Poor? and 'gat you? Profane not. Had your father
Slept all the happy remnant of his life
After that act, lain but there still, and panted,
He'd done enough, to make himself, his issue,
And his posterity noble.
Dol. Sir, although
We may be said to want the gilt and trappings,
The dress of honour; yet we strive to keep
The seeds and the materials.
Mam. I do see
The old ingredient, virtue, was not lost,
Nor the drug, money, us'd to make your compound.
There's a strange nobility i' your eye,
This lip, that chin! Methinks you do resemble
One o' the Austriac princes.
Face. Very like,
Her father was an Irish costar-monger.
Mam. The house of Valois just had such a nose;
And such a forehead yet the Medici
Of Florence boast.
Dol. Troth, and I have been likened
To all these princes.
Face. I'll be sworn, I heard it.
Mam. I know not how! It is not any one,
But e'en the very choice of all their features.
Face. I'll in, and laugh.
Mam. A certain touch, or air,
That sparkles a divinity, beyond
An earthly beauty!
Dol. O, you play the courtier.
Mam. Good lady, gi' me leave——
Dol. In faith, I may not,
To mock me, sir.

Mam. To burn i' this sweet flame:
The phœnix never knew a nobler death.
Dol. Nay, now you court the courtier; and destroy
What you would build. This art, sir, i' your words,
Calls your whole faith in question.
Mam. By my soul———
Dol. Nay, oaths are made o' the same air, sir.
Mam. Nature
Never bestow'd upon mortality,
A more unblam'd, a more harmonious feature:
She play'd the step-dame in all faces else.
Sweet madam, let me be particular———
Dol. Particular, sir? I pray you, know your distance.
Mam. In no ill sense, sweet lady, but to ask
How your fair grace passes the hours? I see
You are lodg'd, here, i' the house of a rare man,
An excellent artist; but, what's that to you?
Dol. Yes, sir. I study here the mathematics,
And distillation.
Mam. O, I cry your pardon.
He's a divine instructor! can extract
The souls of all things, by his art; call all
The virtues and the miracles of the sun
Into a temperate furnace: teach dull Nature
What her own forces are. A man, the emp'ror
Has courted, above Kelley; sent his medals,
And chains, t' invite him.
Dol. Ay, and for his physic, sir——
Mam. Above the art of Æsculapius,
That drew the envy of the Thunderer!
I know all this, and more.
Dol. Troth, I am taken, sir,
Whole, with these studies that contemplate nature.
Mam. It is a noble humour. But, this form
Was not intended to so dark a use!
Had you been crooked, foul, of some coarse mould,
A cloister had done well: but, such a feature
That might stand up the glory of a kingdom,
To live recluse! is a mere solecism,
Though in a nunnery. It must not be.
I muse, my lord your brother will permit it!
You should spend half my land first, were I he.
Does not this diamond better on my finger
Than i' the quarry?
Dol. Yes.
Mam. Why, you are like it.
You were created, lady, for the light!
Here, you shall wear it; take it, the first pledge
Of what I speak: to bind you to believe me.
Dol. In chains of adamant?
Mam. Yes, the strongest bands.
And take a secret, too. Here, by your side,
Doth stand, this hour, the happiest man in Europe.
Dol. You are contented, sir?
Mam. Nay, in true being:
The envy of princes, and the fear of states.
Dol. Say you so, Sir Epicure!
Mam. Yes, and thou shalt prove it,
Daughter of honour. I have cast mine eye
Upon thy form, and I will rear this beauty
Above all styles.
Dol. You mean no treason, sir!
Mam. No, I will take away that jealousy.
I am the lord of the philosopher's stone,
And thou the lady.
Dol. How, sir! ha' you that?
Mam. I am the master of the mastery.
This day, the good old wretch, here, o' the house,
Has made it for us. Now, he's at projection.
Think, therefore, thy first wish, now; let me hear it:
And it shall rain into thy lap, no shower,
But floods of gold, whole cataracts, a deluge,
To get a nation on thee!
Dol. You are pleased, sir,
To work on the ambition of our sex.
Mam. I'm pleas'd, the glory of her sex should know,
This nook here, of the friar's, is no climate
For her to live obscurely in, to learn
Physic and surgery, for the constable's wife
Of some odd hundred in Essex; but come forth,
And taste the air of palaces; eat, drink,
The toils of emp'rics, and their boasted practice;
Tincture of pearl, and coral, gold, and amber;
Be seen at feasts, and triumphs; have it ask'd,
What miracle she is? Set all the eyes
Of court afire, like a burning-glass,
And work 'em into cinders; when the jewels
Of twenty states adorn thee; and the light
Strikes out the stars; that, when thy name is mention'd,
Queens may look pale: and we but shewing our love,
Nero's Poppœa may be lost in story!
Thus will we have it.
Dol. I could well consent, sir.
But in a monarchy, how will this be?
The prince will soon take notice; and both seize
You and your stone; it being a wealth unfit
For any private subject.
Mam. If he knew it.
Dol. Yourself do boast it, sir!
Mam. To thee, my life.
Dol. O, but beware, sir! You may come to end
The remnant of your days in a loath'd prison,
By speaking of it.
Mam. 'Tis no idle fear!
We'll therefore go with all, my girl, and live
In a free state; where we will eat our mullets,
Sous'd in high country wines, sup pheasant's eggs,
And have our cockles boil'd in silver shells,
Our shrimps to swim again, as when they liv'd,
In a rare butter, made of dolphin's milk,
Whose cream does look like opals: and with these
Delicate meats, set ourselves high for pleasure,
And take us down again, and then renew
Our youth and strength with drinking the elixir,
And so enjoy a perpetuity
Of life and lust. And, thou shalt ha' thy wardrobe
Richer than Nature's, still to change thyself,

And vary oft'ner, for thy pride, than she;
Or Art, her wise, and almost equal servant.
Face. Sir, you are too loud. I hear you, every word,
Into the laboratory. Some fitter place,
The garden, or great chamber above. How like you her?
Mam. Excellent! Lungs. There's for thee.
Face. But, do you hear?
Good sir, beware, no mention of the rabbines.
Mam. We think not on 'em. [*Exeunt.*
Face. O, it is well, sir. Subtle!

SCENE II.

FACE, SUBTLE, KASTRIL, *and Dame* PLIANT.

Face. Dost thou not laugh?
Sub. Yes. Are they gone?
Face. All's clear.
Sub. The widow is come.
Face. And your quarrelling disciple?
Sub. Ay.
Face. I must to my captainship again, then.
Sub. Stay, bring 'em in first.
Face. So I meant. What is she?
A bonny-bell?
Sub. I know not.
Face. We'll draw lots.
You'll stand to that?
Sub. What else?
Face. O, for a suit,
To fall now, like a curtain, flap!
Sub. To th' door, man.
Face. You'll ha' the first kiss, 'cause I am not ready.
Sub. Yes, and perhaps hit you through both the nostrils.
Face. Who would you speak with?
Kast. Where's the captain?
Face. Gone, sir,
About some business.
Kast. Gone?
Face. He'll return straight.
But master doctor, his lieutenant, is here.
Sub. Come near, my worshipful boy, my *terræ fili*,
That is, my boy of land; make thy approaches:
Welcome, I know thy lusts, and thy desires,
And I will serve and satisfy 'em. Begin,
Charge me from thence, or thence, or in this line;
Here is my centre: Ground thy quarrel.
Kast. You lie.
Sub. How, child of wrath and anger! the loud lie?
For what, my sudden boy!
Kast. Nay, that look you to,
I am aforehand.
Sub. O, this's no true grammar,
And as ill logic: You must render causes, child,
Your first and second intentions, know your canons,
And your divisions, modes, degrees, and differences,
Your predicaments, substance, and accident,
Series externe, and interne, with their causes,
Efficient, material, formal, final,
And ha' your elements perfect——
Kast. What is this!
The angry tongues he talks in?
Sub. That false precept,
Of being aforehand, has deceiv'd a number;
And made 'em enter quarrels oftentimes,
Before they were aware: and, afterward,
Against their wills.
Kast. How must I do then, sir?
Sub. I cry this lady's mercy. She should, first,
Have been saluted. I do call you lady,
Because you are to be one ere 't be long,
My soft and buxom widow.
Kast. Is she, i'faith? [SUB. *kisses her.*
Sub. Yes, or my art is an egregious liar.
Kast. How know you?
Sub. By inspection on her forehead,
And subtilty of her lip, which must be tasted
[*He kisses her again.*
Often to make a judgment. 'Slight, she melts
Like a myrobalane! Here is yet a line
In *rivo frontis*, tells me he is no knight.
Pli. What is he then, sir?
Sub. Let me see your hand.
O, your *linea fortunæ* makes it plain;
And *stella* here, in *monte veneris*:
But most of all, *junctura annularis*.
He is a soldier, or a man of art, lady:
But shall have some great honour, shortly.
Pli. Brother,
He's a rare man, believe me!
Kast. Hold your peace.
Here comes t'other rare man. 'Save you, captain.
Face. Good master Kastril, is this your sister?
Kast. Ay, sir,
Please you to kiss her, and be proud to know her.
Face. I shall be proud to know you, lady.
Pli. Brother,
He calls me lady too.
Kast. Ay, peace. I heard it.
Face. The count is come.
Sub. Where is he?
Face. At the door.
Sub. Why, you must entertain him.
Face. What 'll you do
With these the while?
Sub. Why, have 'em up, and shew 'em
Some fustian book, or the dark glass.
Face. 'Fore God,
She is a delicate dab-chick! I must have her.
Sub. Must you? Ay, if your fortune will, you must.
Come, sir, the captain will come to us presently.
I'll ha' you to my chamber of demonstrations,
Where I'll shew you both the grammar, and logic,
And rhetoric of quarrelling; my whole method,
Drawn out in tables: and my instrument,
That hath the several scales upon't, shall make you
Able to quarrel, at a straw's breadth, by moonlight.
And, lady, I'll have you look in a glass,

Some half an hour, but to clear your eye-sight,
Against you see your fortune: which is greater
Than I may judge upon the sudden, trust me.

SCENE III.

FACE, SUBTLE, *and* SURLY.

Face. Where are you, doctor?
Sub. I'll come to you presently.
Face. I will ha' this same widow, now I ha' seen her,
On any composition.
Sub. What do you say?
Face. Ha' you dispos'd of them?
Sub. I ha' sent 'em up.
Face. Subtle, in troth, I needs must have this widow.
Sub. Is that the matter?
Face. Nay, but hear me,
Sub. Go to,
If you rebel once, Dol shall know it all.
Therefore be quiet, and obey your chance.
Face. Nay, thou art so violent now——do but conceive:
Thou art old, and canst not serve——
Sub. Who, cannot I?
'Slight, I will serve her with thee, for a——
Face. Nay,
But understand: I'll gi' you composition.
Sub. I will not treat with thee: What, sell my fortune?
'Tis better than my birth-right. Do not murmur.
Win her, and carry her. If you grumble, Dol
Knows it directly.
Face. Well, sir, I am silent.
Will you go help to fetch in Don in state?
Sub. I follow you, sir: We must keep Face in awe,
Or he will overlook us like a tyrant.
Brain of a tailor! Who comes here? Don John!
Sur. Sennores, beso las manos, à vuestras mercedes. [SURLY *like a Spaniard.*
Sub. Would you had stoop'd a little, and kissed our Anos.
Face. Pace, Subtle.
Sub. Stab me, I shall never hold, man.
He looks in that deep ruff, like a head in a platter,
Serv'd in by a short cloak upon two tressils!
Face. Or, what do you say to a collar of brawn, cut down
Beneath the souse, and wriggled with a knife?
Sub. 'Slid, he does look too fat to be a Spaniard.
Face. Perhaps some Fleming, or some Hollander got him
In D'Alva's time: Count Egmont's bastard.
Sub. Don,
Your scurvy, yellow, Madrid face is welcome.
Sur. Gratia.
Sub. He speaks out of a fortification.
Pray God he ha' no squibs in those deep sets.
Sur. Por dios, sennores, muy linda casa!
Sub. What says he?
Face. Praises the house, I think,
I know no more but's action.
Sub. Yes, the Casa,
My precious Diego, will prove fair enough,
To cozen you in. Do you mark? you shall
Be cozened, Diego.
Face. Cozened, do you see?
My worthy Donzel, cozened.
Sur. Entiendo.
Sub. Do you intend it? So do we, dear Don.
Have you brought pistolets? or portagues?
[*He feels his pockets.*
My solemn Don! Dost thou feel any?
Face. Full.
Sub. You shall be emptied, Don; pumped, and drawn
Dry, as they say.
Face. Milked, in troth, sweet Don.
Sub. See all the monsters; the great lion of all, Don.
Sur. Con licencia, se puede ver à esta Sennorà?
Sub. What talks he now?
Face. O' the Sennora.
Sub. O, Don,
That is the lioness, which you shall see
Also, my Don.
Face. 'Slid, Subtle, how shall we do?
Sub. For what?
Face. Why, Dol's employ'd, you know.
Sub. That's true;
'Fore Heav'n I know not: He must stay, that's all.
Face. Stay? That he must not, by no means.
Sub. No, why?
Face. Unless you'll mar all. 'Slight, he'll suspect it,
And then he will not pay, not half so well.
This is a travell'd punk-master, and does know
All the delays; a notable hot rascal,
And looks already rampant.
Sub. 'Sdeath, and Mammon
Must not be troubled.
Face. Mammon, in no case!
Sub. What shall we do then?
Face. Think: you must be sudden.
Sur. Entiendo, que la Sennora es tan hermosa, que codicio tan
A ver la, como la bien aventuránça de mi vida.
Face. Mi vida? 'Slid, Subtle, he puts me in mind o' the widow.
What dost thou say to draw her to't? ha?
And tell her it is her fortune. All our venture
Now lies upon't. It is but one man more,
Which on's chance to have her; and, beside,
There is no maidenhead to be fear'd or lost.
What dost thou think on't, Subtle?
Sub. Who, I! Why——
Face. The credit of our house too is engag'd.
Sub. You made me an offer for my share e'er while.
What wilt thou gi' me, i' faith?
Face. O, by that light,
I'll not buy now. You know your doom to me.
E'en take your lot, obey your chance, sir; win her,
And wear her out for me.
Sub. 'Slight, I'll not work her then.
Face. It is the common cause, therefore bethink you.

Dol else must know it, as you said.
Sub. I care not.
Sur. Sennores, por que se tarda tanta?
Sub. Faith, I am not fit, I am old.
Face. That's now no reason, sir.
Sur. Puede ser, de hazer burla de mi amor.
Face. You hear the Don too? By this air, I call
And loose the hinges.—Dol!
Sub. A plague of hell——— .
Face. Will you then do?
Sub. You're a terrible rogue,
I'll think of this: will you, sir, call the widow?
Face. Yes, and I'll take her too, with all her faults,
Now I do think on't better.
Sub. With all my heart, sir;
Am I discharg'd o' the lot?
Face. As you please.
Sub. Hands.
Face. Remember now, that upon any change,
You never claim her.
Sub. Much good joy, and health to you, sir.
Marry a whore? Fate, let me wed a witch first.
Sur. Por estas honradas barbas——
Sub. He swears by his beard.
Dispatch, and call the brother too.
Sur. Tiengo duda, Sennores,
Que no me hagan alguna traycion.
Sub. How, issue on? Yes, *presto Sennor.* Please you
Enthratha the chambratha, worthy Don,
Where, if it please the fates, in your bathada,
You shall be soak'd, and strok'd, and tubb'd, and rubb'd,
And scrubb'd, and fubb'd, dear Don, before you go.
You shall, in faith, my scurvy baboon Don,
Be curried, claw'd, and flaw'd, and taw'd, indeed.
I will the heartilier go about it now,
And make the widow a punk so much the sooner,
To be reveng'd on this impetuous Face:
The quickly doing of it is the grace.

SCENE IV.

FACE, KASTRIL, *Dame* PLIANT, SUBTLE, *and* SURLY.

Face. Come, lady: I knew the doctor would not leave,
Till he had found the very nick of her fortune.
Kast. To be a countess, say you? A Spanish countess, sir!
Pli. Why, is that better than an English countess?
Face. Better! 'Slight, make you that a question, lady?
Kast. Nay, she's a fool, captain, you must pardon her.
Face. Ask from your courtier, to your inns-of-court-man,
To your mere milliner; they will tell you all
Your Spanish jennet is the best horse. Your Spanish
Stoop is the best garb; your Spanish beard
Is the best cut; your Spanish ruffs are the best
Wear; your Spanish pavin the best dance;
Your Spanish titillation in a glove
The best perfume. And, for your Spanish pike,
And Spanish blade, let your poor captain speak.
Here comes the doctor.
Sub. My most honour'd lady,
(For so I am now to style you, having found
By this my scheme, you are to undergo
An honourable fortune, very shortly,)
What will you say now, if some——
Face. I ha' told her all, sir,
And her right worshipful brother here, that she shall be
A countess; do not delay 'em, sir. A Spanish countess.
Sub. Still, my scarce worshipful captain, you can keep
No secret. Well, since he has told you, madam,
Do you forgive him, and I do.
Kast. She shall do that, sir.
I'll look to't, 'tis my charge.
Sub. Well then. Nought rests
But that she fit her love, now, to her fortune.
Pli. Truly, I shall never brook a Spaniard.
Sub. No?
Pli. Never sin' eighty-eight could I abide 'em,
And that was some three years afore I was born, in truth.
Sub. Come, you must love him, or be miserable:
Choose which you will.
Face. By this good rush, persuade her
She will cry strawberries else within this twelvemonth.
Sub. Nay, shads, and mackarel, which is worse.
Face. Indeed, sir!
Kast. Gods-lid, you shall love him, or I'll kick you.
Pli. Why?
I'll do as you will ha' me, brother.
Kast. Do,
Or by this hand I'll maul you.
Face. Nay, good sir,
Be not so fierce.
Sub. No, my enrag'd child,
She will be rul'd. What, when she comes to taste
The pleasures of a countess! to be courted——
Face. And kist, and ruffled!
Sub. Ay, behind the hangings.
Face. And then come forth in pomp!
Sub. And know her state!
Face. Of keeping all th' idolaters o' the chamber
Barer to her than at their prayers!
Sub. Is serv'd
Upon the knee!
Face. And has her pages, huishers,
Footmen, and coaches——
Sub. Her six mares——
Face. Nay, eight!
Sub. To hurry her through London to th' Exchange,
Bet'lem, the China houses——
Face. Yes, and have
The citizens gape at her, and praise her tires!

And my lord's gooseturd bands, that rides with her!
Kast. Most brave! By this hand, you are not my sister,
If you refuse.
Pli. I will not refuse, brother.
Sur. Que es esto, Sennores, que non se venga? Esta tardanza me mata!
Face. It is the count come!
The doctor knew he would be here, by his art.
Sub. En gallanta madama, don! gallantissima!
Sur. Por todos los dioses, la mas acabada Hermosura, que he visto en mi vida!
Face. Is't not a gallant language that they speak?
Kast. An admirable language! Is't not French?
Face. No, Spanish, sir.
Kast. It goes like law French;
And that, they say, is the courtliest language.
Face. List, sir.
Sur. El sol ha perdido su lumbre, con el Resplandor, que trae esta dama. Valga me dios!
Face. He admires your sister.
Kast. Must not she make a curtsie?
Sub. 'Od's will, she must go to him, man, and kiss him!
It is the Spanish fashion for the women
To make first court.
Face. 'Tis true he tells you, sir:
His art knows all.
Sur. Por que no se acude?
Kast. He speaks to her, I think.
Face. That he does, sir.
Sur. Por el amor de dios, que es esto que se tarda?
Kast. Nay, see: She will not understand him! Gull!
Noddy!
Pli. What say you, brother?
Kast. Ass, my sister,
Go kiss him, as the cunning man would ha' you,
I'll thrust a pin i' your buttocks else.
Face. O, no sir.
Sur. Sennora mia, mi persona muy indigno esta Allegar à tánta Hermosura.
Face. Does he not use her bravely?
Kast. Bravely, i' faith!
Face. Nay, he will use her better.
Kast. Do you think so?
Sur. Sennora, si sera servida, entremos.
Kast. Where does he carry her?
Face. Into the garden, sir:
Take you no thought: I must interpret for her.
Sub. Give Dol the word. Come, my fierce child, advance,
We'll to our quarrelling lesson again.
Kast. Agreed.
I love a Spanish boy with all my heart.
Sub. Nay, and by this means, sir, you shall be brother
To a great count.
Kast. Ay, I knew that at first.
This match will advance the house of the Kastrils.
Sub. Pray God, your sister prove but pliant.
Kast. Why,
Her name is so; by her other husband.
Sub. How!
Kast. The widow Pliant, knew you not that?
Sub. No, faith, sir.
Yet, by erection of her figure, I guess'd it.
Come, let's go practise.
Kast. Yes; but do you think, doctor,
I e'er shall quarrel well?
Sub. I warrant you.

SCENE V.

DOL, MAMMON, FACE, *and* SUBTLE.

Dol. For after Alexander's death——
Mam. Good lady— [*In her fit of talking.*
Dol. That Perdiccas and Antigonus were slain,
The two that stood, Seleuc and Ptolomee——
Mam. Madam.
Dol. Made up the two legs, and the fourth beast.
That was Gog-north, and Egypt south; which after
Was call'd Gog Iron-leg, and South Iron-leg——
Mam. Lady——
Dol. And then Gog-horn'd. So was Egypt too:
Then Egypt Clay-leg, and Gog Clay-leg——
Mam. Sweet madam!
Dol. And last Gog-dust, and Egypt-dust, which fall
In the last link of the fourth chain. And these
Be stars in story, which none see, or look at——
Mam. What shall I do?
Dol. For, as he says, except
We call the rabbins, and the heathen Greeks—
Mam. Dear lady.
Dol. To come from Salem, and from Athens,
And teach the people of Great Britain——
Face. What's the matter, sir?
Dol. To speak the tongue of Eber, and Javan—
Mam. O,
She's in her fit.
Dol. We shall know nothing.
Face. Death, sir,
We are undone.
Dol. Where then, a learned linguist
Shall see the antient us'd communion
Of vowels and consonants——
Face. My master will hear!
Dol. A wisdom, which Pythagoras held most high——
Mam. Sweet honourable lady!
Dol. To comprise
All sounds of voices, in few marks of letters—
Face. Nay, you must never hope to lay her now.
Dol. And so we arrive by Talmud skill,
And profane Greek, to raise the building up
Of Helen's house, against the Ismaelite,
King of Thogarma, and his habergions
Brimstony, blue, and fiery; and the force
Of king Abaddon, and the beast of Cittim,
Which rabbi David Kimchi, Onkelos,
And Aben-Ezra do interpret Rome.
Face. How did you put her into't?
Mam. Alas, I talk'd [*They speak together.*
Of a fifth monarchy I would erect,

With the philosopher's stone (by chance) and she
Falls on the other four straight.
Face. Out of Broughton!
I told you so. 'Slid, stop her mouth.
Mam. Is't best?
Face. She'll never leave else. If the old man hear her,
We are but feeces, ashes.
Sub. What's to do there?
Face. O, we are lost. Now she hears him, she is quiet.
Mam. Where shall I hide me?
Sub. How! What sight is here!
[*Upon* SUBTLE's *entry they disperse.*
Close deeds of darkness, and that shun the light!
Bring him again. Who is he? What, my son!
O, I have liv'd too long.
Mam. Nay, good, dear father,
There was no unchaste purpose.
Sub. Not? and fly me,
When I come in?
Mam. That was my error.
Sub. Error?
Guilt, guilt, my son. Give it the right name. No marvel,
If I found check in our great work within,
When such affairs as these were managing!
Mam. Why, have you so?
Sub. It has stood still this half hour:
And all the rest of our less work's gone back.
Where is the instrument of wickedness,
My lewd false drudge?
Mam. Nay, good sir, blame not him.
Believe me, 'twas against his will, or knowledge.
I saw her by chance.
Sub. Will you commit more sin
To excuse a varlet?
Mam. By my hope, 'tis true, sir.
Sub. Nay, then I wonder less, if you, for whom
The blessing was prepar'd, would so tempt Heaven,
And lose your fortunes.
Mam. Why, sir?
Sub. This will retard
The work a month at least.
Mam. Why, if it do,
What remedy? but think it not, good father:
Our purposes were honest.
Sub. As they were,
So the reward will prove. How now! Ay me.
[*A great crack and noise within.*
God, and all saints be good to us! What's that?
Face. O sir, we are defeated! all the works
Are flown *in fumo*; every glass is burst,
Furnace, and all, rent down! as if a bolt
Of thunder had been driven through the house.
Retorts, receivers, pellicans, bolt-heads,
All struck in shivers! Help, good sir! Alas,
[SUBTLE *falls down as in a swoon.*
Coldness and death invade him. Nay, sir Mammon,
Do the fair offices of a man! You stand,
As you were readier to depart than he.
Who's there? My lord her brother is come.
Mam. Ha, Lungs? [*One knocks.*
Face. His coach is at the door. Avoid his sight,
For he's as furious as his sister is mad.
Mam. Alas!
Face. My brain is quite undone with the fumes, sir:
I ne'er must hope to be mine own man again.
Mam. Is all lost, Lungs? Will nothing be preserv'd
Of all our cost?
Face. Faith, very little, sir.
A peck of coals, or so, which is cold comfort, sir.
Mam. O my voluptuous mind! I am justly punish'd.
Face. And so am I, sir.
Mam. Cast from all my hopes——
Face. Nay, certainties, sir.
Mam. By mine own base affections.
Sub. O, the curst fruits of vice and lust!
Mam. Good father,
[SUBTLE *seems to come to himself.*
It was my sin. Forgive it.
Sub. Hangs my roof
Over us still, and will not fall, O justice,
Upon us, for this wicked man!
Face. Nay, look, sir,
You grieve him now, with staying in his sight:
Good sir, the noble man will come too, and take you,
And that may breed a tragedy.
Mam. I'll go.
Face. Ay, and repent at home, sir. It may be,
For some good penance, you may ha' it yet,
A hundred pound to the box at Bet'lem——
Mam. Yes.
Face. For the restoring such as ha' their wits.
Mam. I'll do't.
Face. I'll send one to you to receive it.
Mam. Do.
Is no projection left?
Face. All flown, or stinks, sir.
Mam. Will naught be sav'd, that's good for med'cine, think'st thou?
Face. I cannot tell, sir. There will be, perhaps,
Something about the scraping of the shardes,
Will cure the itch: though not your itch of mind, sir.
It shall be sav'd for you, and sent home. Good sir,
This way: for fear the lord should meet you.
Sub. Face!
Face. Ay.
Sub. Is he gone?
Face. Yes, and as heavily,
As all the gold he hop'd for were in his blood.
Let us be light, though.
Sub. Ay, as balls, and bound,
And hit our heads against the roof for joy:
There's so much of our care now cast away.
Face. Now to our Don.
Sub. Yes, your young widow, by this time,

Is made a countess, Face: She has been in travail
Of a young heir for you.
Face. Good, sir.
Sub. Off with your case,
And greet her kindly, as a bridegroom should,
After these common hazards.
Face. Very well, sir.
Will you go fetch Don Diego off, the while?
Sub. And fetch him over too, if you'll be pleas'd, sir:
Would Dol were in her place, to pick his pockets now.
Face. Why, you can do it as well, if you would set to't.
I pray you prove your virtue.
Sub. For your sake, sir.

SCENE VI.

SURLY, *Dame* PLIANT, SUBTLE, *and* FACE.

Sur. Lady, you see into what hands you are fall'n;
'Mongst what a nest of villains! and how near
Your honour was t' have catch'd a certain clap
(Through your credulity) had I but been
So punctually forward, as place, time,
And other circumstances, would ha' made a man:
For you're a handsome woman: would you were wise, too.
I am a gentleman, come here disguis'd,
Only to find the knaveries of this citadel,
And where I might have wrong'd your honour, and have not,
I claim some interest in your love. You are,
They say, a widow, rich: and I am a bachelor
Worth naught: Your fortunes may make me a man,
As mine ha' preserv'd you a woman. Think upon it,
And whether I have deserv'd you or no.
Pli. I will, sir.
Sur. And for these household rogues, let me alone
To treat with them.
Sub. How doth my noble Diego?
And my dear madam countess? Hath the count
Been courteous, lady? liberal? and open?
Donzell, methinks you look melancholic,
After your coitum, and scurvy! Truly,
I do not like the dulness of your eye:
It hath a heavy cast, 'tis upsee Dutch,
And says you are a lumpish whore-master.
Be lighter, I will make your pockets so.
[*He falls to picking of them.*
Sur. Will you, Don Bawd, and pick-purse? How now? Reel you?
Stand up, sir, you shall find, since I am so heavy,
I'll gi' you equal weight.
Sub. Help, murder!
Sur. No, sir,
There's no such thing intended. A good cart,
And a clean whip, shall ease you of that fear.
I am the Spanish Don, that shall be cozen'd,
Do you see? cozen'd? Where's your captain Face?
That parcel-broker, and whole-bawd, all rascal.
Face. How, Surly!
Sur. O, make your approach, good captain.
I have found from whence your copper rings, and spoons
Come now, wherewith you cheat abroad in taverns.
'Twas here you learnt to anoint your boot with brimstone,
Then rub men's gold on't, for a kind of touch,
And say 'twas naught, when you had chang'd the colour,
That you might ha't for nothing? And this doctor,
Your sooty, smoky-bearded compeer, he
Will close you so much gold, in a bolt's-head,
And, on a turn, convey, i' the stead, another
With sublim'd mercury, that shall burst i' the heat,
And fly out all *in fumo*? Then weeps Mammon:
Then swoons his worship. Or, he is the Faustus,
That casteth figures, and can conjure, cures
Plague, piles, and pox, by the ephemerides,
And holds intelligence with all the bawds,
And midwives of three shires? while you send in——
Captain, (what, is he gone?) damsels with child,
Wives that are barren, or, the waiting-maid
With the green-sickness? Nay, sir, you must tarry
Though he be 'scap't; and answer by the ears, sir.

SCENE VII.

FACE, KASTRIL, SURLY, SUBTLE, DRUGGER, ANANIAS, *Dame* PLIANT *and* DOL.

Face. Why, now's the time, if ever you will quarrel
Well, as they say, and be a true-born child.
The doctor and your sister, both are abus'd.
Kast. Where is he? which is he? he is a slave
Whate'er he is, and the son of a whore. Are you
The man, sir, I would know?
Sur. I should be loth, sir,
To confess so much.
Kast. Then you lie i' your throat.
Sur. How?
Face. A very arrant rogue, sir, and a cheater.
Employ'd here by another conjurer,
That does not love the doctor, and would cross him
If he knew how——
Sur. Sir, you are abus'd.
Kast. You lie:
And 'tis no matter.
Face. Well said, sir. He is
The impudent'st rascal——
Sur. You are indeed. Will you hear me, sir?
Face. By no means: Bid him begone.

Kast. Begone, sir, quickly.
Sur. This 's strange! Lady, do you inform your brother.
Face. There is not such a foist in all the town,
The doctor had him presently: and finds, yet,
The Spanish count will come here. Bear up, Subtle.
Sub. Yes, sir, he must appear within this hour.
Face. And yet this rogue would come, in a disguise,
By the temptation of another spirit,
To trouble our art, though he could not hurt it.
Kast. Ay,
I know—Away, you talk like a foolish mauther.
Sur. Sir, all is truth she says.
Face. Do not believe him, sir:
He is the lying'st swabber! Come your ways, sir.
Sur. You are valiant out of company.
Kast. Yes, how then, sir?
Face. Nay, here's an honest fellow too, that knows him;
And all his tricks. Make good what I say, Abel,
This cheater would ha' cozen'd thee o' the widow.
He owes this honest Drugger, here, seven pound,
He has had on him in two-penny'orths of tobacco.
Drug. Yes, sir. And he has damn'd himself three terms, to pay me.
Face. And what does he owe for *lotium*?
Drug. Thirty shillings, sir:
And for six syringes.
Sur. Hydra of villany!
Face. Nay, sir, you must quarrel him out o' the house.
Kast. I will.
Sir, if you get not out o' doors, you lie:
And you are a pimp.
Sur. Why, this is madness, sir,
Not valour in you: I must laugh at this.
Kast. It is my humour: you are a pimp, and a trig,
And an Amadis de Gaule, or a Don Quixote.
Drug. Or a knight o' the curious coxcomb. Do you see?
Ana. Peace to the household.
Kast. I'll keep peace for no man.
Ana. Casting of dollars is concluded lawful.
Kast. Is he the constable?
Sub. Peace, Ananias.
Face. No, sir.
Kast. Then you are an otter, and a shad, a whit,
A very Tim.
Sur. You'll hear me, sir?
Kast. I will not.
Ana. What is the motive?
Sub. Zeal in the young gentleman,
Against his Spanish slops——
Ana. They are profane,
Lewd, superstitious, and idolatrous breeches.
Sur. New rascals!
Kast. Will you be gone, sir?
Ana. Avoid Satan,
Thou art not of the light. That ruff of pride,
About thy neck, betrays thee: and is the same
With that, which the unclean birds, in seventy-seven,
Were seen to prank it with, on divers coasts.
Thou look'st like antichrist in that lewd hat.
Sur. I must give way.
Kast. Begone, sir.
Sub. But I'll take
A course with you——
Ana. Depart, proud Spanish fiend.
Sub. Captain and doctor——
Ana. Child of perdition.
Kast. Hence, sir. [*Exit* SUR.
Did I not quarrel bravely?
Face. Yes, indeed, sir.
Kast. Nay, and I give my mind to't, I shall do't.
Face. O, you must follow, sir, and threaten him tame.
He'll turn again else.
Kast. I'll return him then. [*Exit.*
Face. Drugger, this rogue prevented us, for thee:
We had determin'd, that thou should'st ha' come,
In a Spanish suit, and ha' carried her so; and he,
A brokerly slave, goes, puts it on himself.
Hast brought the damask?
Drug. Yes, sir.
Face. Thou must borrow
A Spanish suit. Hast thou no credit with the players?
Drug. Yes, sir; did you never see me play the fool?
Face. I know not, Nab: Thou shalt, if I can help it.
Hieronymo's old cloak, and ruff, and hat, will serve,
I'll tell thee more, when thou bring'st 'em.
Ana. Sir, I know [SUBTLE *hath whisper'd with him this while.*
The Spaniard hates the brethren, and hath spies
Upon their actions: and that this was one
I make no scruple. But the holy synod
Have been in prayer and meditation, for it;
And 'tis reveal'd no less to them than me,
That casting of money is most lawful.
Sub. True.
But here, I cannot do it; if the house
Should chance to be suspected, all would out,
And we be lock'd up in the Tower for ever,
To make gold there, for th' state, never come cut:
And, then, are you defeated.
Ana. I will tell
This to the elders, and the weaker brethren,
That the whole company of the separation
May join in humble prayer again.
Sub. And fasting.
Ana. Yea, for some fitter place. The peace of mind
Rest with these walls. [*Exit.*
Sub. Thanks, courteous Ananias.

Face. What did he come for?
Sub. About casting dollars,
Presently out o' hand. And so, I told him,
A Spanish minister came here to spy,
Against the faithful——
Face. I conceive. Come, Subtle,
Thou art so down upon the least disaster!
How would'st thou ha' done, if I had not help'd thee out?
Sub. I thank thee, Face, for the Angry Boy, i'faith.
Face. Who would ha' look'd, it should been that rascal
Surly? He had dy'd his beard, and all. Well, sir,
Here's damask come to make you a suit.
Sub. Where's Drugger?
Face. He is gone to borrow me a Spanish habit;
I'll be the count now.
Sub. But where's the widow?
Face. Within, with my lord's sister: madam Dol
Is entertaining her.
Sub. By your favour, Face,
Now she is honest, I will stand again.
Face. You will not offer it?
Sub. Why?
Face. Stand to your word,
Or—here comes Dol. She knows——
Sub. You're tyrannous still.
Face. Strict for my right. How now, Dol, hast told her
The Spanish count will come?
Dol. Yes, but another is come
You little look'd for!
Face. Who's that?
Dol. Your master:
The master of the house.
Sub. How, Dol!
Face. She lies. This is some trick.
Come, leave your quibblings, Dorothy.
Dol. Look out, and see.
Sub. Art thou in earnest?
Dol. 'Slight,
Forty o' the neighbours are about him, talking.
Face. 'Tis he, by this good day.
Dol. 'Twill prove ill day
For some on us.
Face. We are undone, and taken.
Dol. Lost, I'm afraid.
Sub. You said he would not come,
While there died one a-week within the liberties.
Face. No: 'Twas within the walls.
Sub. Was't so? Cry you mercy:
I thought the liberties. What shall we do now, Face?
Face. Be silent: not a word, if he call, or knock;
I'll into mine old shape again, and meet him,
Of Jeremy, the butler. I' the mean time,
Do you two pack up all the goods, and purchase,
That we can carry i' the two trunks. I'll keep him
Off for to-day, if I cannot longer; and then
At night, I'll ship you both away to Ratcliff,
Where we'll meet to-morrow, and there we'll share.
Let Mammon's brass and pewter keep the cellar
We'll have another time for that. But, Dol,
Pray thee, go heat a little water, quickly,
Subtle must shave me. All my captain's beard
Must off, to make me appear smooth Jeremy.
You'll do't?
Sub. Yes, I'll shave you as well as I can.
[*Exeunt*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

LOVE-WIT *and Neighbours.*

Love. Has there been such resort, say you?
1 *Neigh.* Daily, sir.
2 *Neigh.* And nightly too.
3 *Neigh.* Ay, some as brave as lords.
4 *Neigh.* Ladies and gentlewomen.
5 *Neigh.* Citizens' wives.
1 *Neigh.* And knights.
6 *Neigh.* In coaches.
2 *Neigh.* Yes, and oyster-women.
1 *Neigh.* Besides other gallants.
3 *Neigh.* Sailors' wives.
4 *Neigh.* Tobacco-men.
5 *Neigh.* Another Pimlico!
Love. What should my knave advance,
To draw this company? he hung out no banners
Of a strange calf with five legs to be seen?
Or a huge lobster, with six claws?
6 *Neigh.* No, sir.
3 *Neigh.* We had gone in, then, sir.
Love. He has no gift
Of teaching i' the nose that e'er I knew of!
You saw no bills set up that promised cure
Of agues, or the tooth-ache?
2 *Neigh.* No such thing, sir.
Love. Nor heard a drum strook for baboons, puppets?
5 *Neigh.* Neither, sir.
Love. What device should he bring forth now
I love a teeming wit as I love my nourishment
Pray God he ha' not kept such open house,
That he hath sold my hangings and my beddin
I left him nothing else. If he have eat 'em,
A plague o' the mouth, say I. Sure he has g
Some bawdy pictures to call all this ging;
The friar and the nun; or the new motion
Of the knight's courser covering the parso
mare;
The boy of six years old with the great thing

Or't may be, he has the fleas that run at tilt
Upon a table, or some dog to dance:
When saw you him?
1 *Neigh.* Who, sir, Jeremy?
2 *Neigh.* Jeremy Butler?
We saw him not this month.
Love. How!
4 *Neigh.* Not these five weeks, sir.
Neigh. These six weeks, at the least.
Love. You 'maze me, neighbours!
5 *Neigh.* Sure, if your worship know not where he is,
He's slipt away.
6 *Neigh.* Pray God he be not made away!
Love. Ha? It's no time to question, then.
6 *Neigh.* About [*He knocks.*
Some three weeks since, I heard a doleful cry,
As I sat up a-mending my wife's stockings.
Love. This is strange, that none will answer! did'st thou hear
A cry, say'st thou?
6 *Neigh.* Yes, sir, like unto a man
That had been strangled an hour, and could not speak.
2 *Neigh.* I heard it too, just this day three weeks, at two o'clock
Next morning.
Love. These be miracles, or you make 'em so.
A man an hour strangled, and could not speak,
And you both heard him cry!
3 *Neigh.* Yes, downward, sir.
Love. Thou art a wise fellow: give me thy hand, I pray thee.
What trade art thou on?
3 *Neigh.* A smith, an't please your worship.
Love. A smith? then lend me thy help to get this door open.
3 *Neigh.* That I will, presently, sir; but fetch my tools—
1 *Neigh.* Sir, best to knock again afore you break it.

SCENE II.

LOVE-WIT, FACE, *and Neighbours.*

Love. I will.
Face. What mean you, sir?
1, 2, 4 *Neigh.* O, here's Jeremy!
Face. Good sir, come from the door.
Love. Why! what's the matter?
Face. Yet farther, you are too near yet.
Love. I' the name of wonder,
What means the fellow?
Face. The house, sir, has been visited.
Love. What? with the plague? Stand thou, then, farther.
Face. No, sir; I had it not.
Love. Who had it, then? I left
None else but thee i' the house!
Face. Yes, sir, my fellow,
The cat, that keeps the buttery, had it on her
A week before I spied it: but I got her
Conveyed away i' the night. And so I shut
The house up for a month—
Love. How!
Face. Purposing then, sir,
T'have burnt rose-vinegar, treacle, and tar,
And ha' made it sweet, that you should ne'er ha' known it:
Because I knew the news would but afflict you, sir.
Love. Breathe less, and farther off. Why, this is stranger!
The neighbours tell me all, here, that the doors
Have still been open—
Face. How, sir!
Love. Gallants, men and women,
And of all sorts, tag rag, been seen to flock here
In threaves, these ten weeks, as to a second Hogsden,
In days of Pimlico and Eye-bright!
Face. Sir, their wisdoms will not say so!
Love. To-day they speak
Of coaches and gallants; one in a French hood
Went in, they tell me; and another was seen
In a velvet gown at the window! divers more
Pass in and out.
Face. They did pass through the doors then,
Or walls, I assure their eyesights and their spectacles;
For here, sir, are the keys, and here have been,
In this my pocket, now, above twenty days!
And for before, I kept the fort alone there.
But that 'tis yet not deep i' the afternoon,
I should believe my neighbours had seen double
Through the black-pot, and made these apparitions;
For, on my faith to your worship, for these three weeks,
And upwards, the door has not been opened.
Love. Strange!
1 *Neigh.* Good faith, I think I saw a coach!
2 *Neigh.* And I too, I'd ha' been sworn!
Love. Do you but think it now?
And but one coach?
4 *Neigh.* We cannot tell, sir: Jeremy
Is a very honest fellow.
Face. Did you see me at all?
1 *Neigh.* No, that we are sure on.
2 *Neigh.* I'll be sworn o' that.
Love. Fine rogues to have your testimonies built on!
3 *Neigh.* Is Jeremy come?
1 *Neigh.* O, yes, you may leave your tools,
We were deceived, he says.
2 *Neigh.* He has had the keys:
And the doors have been shut these three weeks.
3 *Neigh.* Like enough.
Love. Peace, and get hence, you changelings.
Face. Surly come!
And Mammon made acquainted? they'll tell all.
How shall I beat them off? what shall I do?
Nothing's more wretched than a guilty conscience.

SCENE III.

SURLY, MAMMON, LOVE-WIT, FACE, *Neighbours*, KASTRIL, ANANIAS, TRIBULATION, DAPPER, *and* SUBTLE.

Sur. No, sir, he was a great physician. This,
It was no bawdy-house, but a mere chancel.

You knew the lord and his sister?
Mam. Nay, good Surly—
Sur. The happy word, be rich—
Mam. Play not the tyrant—
Sur. Should be to-day pronounced to all your friends.
And where be your andirons now? and your brass pots?
That should ha' been golden flaggons and great wedges?
Mam. Let me but breathe. What! they ha' shut their doors
Methinks?
Sur. Ay, now 'tis holiday with them.
Mam. Rogues, cozeners, impostors, bawds. [*Knocks.*
Face. What mean you, sir?
Mam. To enter, if we can.
Face. Another man's house?
Here is the owner, sir. Turn you to him,
And speak your business.
Mam. Are you, sir, the owner?
Love. Yes, sir.
Mam. And are those knaves within your cheaters?
Love. What knaves? what cheaters?
Mam. Subtle, and his Lungs.
Face. The gentleman is distracted, sir! No lungs
Nor lights ha' been seen here these three weeks, sir,
Within these doors, upon my word.
Sur. Your word, groom arrogant!
Face. Yes, sir, I am the housekeeper,
And know the keys ha' not been out o' my hands.
Sur. This's a new face.
Face. You do mistake the house, sir!
What sign was't at?
Sur. You rascal! this is one
O' the confederacy. Come, let's get officers,
And force the door.
Love. Pray you stay, gentlemen.
Sur. No, sir, we'll come with warrant.
Mam. Ay, and then we shall ha' your doors open.
Love. What means this?
Face. I cannot tell, sir.
1 *Neigh.* These are two o' the gallants
That we do think we saw.
Face. Two o' the fools;
You talk as idly as they. Good faith, sir,
I think the moon has crazed 'em all! O me,
The Angry Boy come too! he'll make a noise,
And ne'er away till he have betrayed us all.
Kast. What, rogues, bawds, slaves, you'll open the door anon,
Punk, cockatrice, my sister. By this light, [KAST. *knocks.*
I'll fetch the marshal to you. You are a whore,
To keep your castle—
Face. Who would you speak with, sir?
Kast. The bawdy doctor, and the cozening captain,
And puss, my sister.
Love. This is something, sure!
Face. Upon my trust, the doors were never open, sir.
Kast. I have heard all their tricks told me twice over,
By the fat knight and the lean gentleman.
Love. Here comes another.
Face. Ananias too, and his pastor!
Trib. The doors are shut against us.
Ana. Come forth, you seed of sulphur, sons of fire, [*They beat too at the door.*
Your stench it is broke forth; abomination
Is in the house.
Kast. Ay, my sister's there.
Ana. The place,
It is become a cage of unclean birds.
Kast. Yes, I will fetch the scavenger and the constable.
Trib. You shall do well.
Ana. We'll join to weed them out.
Kast. You will not come, then. Punk, device, my sister!
Ana. Call her not sister. She is a harlot, verily
Kast. I'll raise the street.
Love. Good gentlemen, a word.
Ana. Satan, avoid, and hinder not our zeal.
Love. The world's turned bet'lem.
Face. These are all broke loose,
Out of St Katherine's, where they use to keep
The better sort of mad folks.
1 *Neigh.* All these persons
We saw go in and out here.
2 *Neigh.* Yes, indeed, sir.
3 *Neigh.* These were the parties.
Face. Peace, you drunkards! Sir,
I wonder at it! Please you to give me leave
To touch the door, I'll try an' the lock be changed.
Love. It mazes me!
Face. Good faith, sir, I believe
There's no such thing. 'Tis all *deceptio visus.*—
Would I could get him away!
Dap. Master captain! master doctor! [DAP. *cries out within.*
Love. Who's that?
Face. Our clerk within, that I forgot!—I know not, sir.
Dap. For God's sake, when will her grace be at leisure?
Face. Ha!
Illusions, some spirit o' the air:—his gag is melted,
And now he sets out the throat.
Dap. I am almost stifled.—
Face. Would you were altogether.
Love. 'Tis i' the house. Ha! list!
Face. Believe it, sir, i' the air.
Love. Peace, you—
Dap. Mine aunt's grace does not use me well.
Sub. You fool, peace, you'll mar all.
Face. Or you will else, you rogue.
Love. O, is it so? then you converse with spirits!
Come, sir. No more o' your tricks, good Jeremy,
The truth, the shortest way.
Face. Dismiss this rabble, sir.
What shall I do? I am catched.
Love. Good neighbours,

I thank you all. You may depart. Come, sir,
You know that I am an indulgent master:
And therefore conceal nothing. What's your med'cine
To draw so many several sorts of wild fowl?
Face. Sir, you were wont to affect mirth and wit:
But here's no place to talk on't i' the street.
Give me but leave to make the best of my fortune,
And only pardon me the abuse of your house:
It's all I beg; I'll help you to a widow,
In recompence, that you shall gi' me thanks for,
Will make you seven years younger, and a rich one.
'Tis but your putting on a Spanish cloak:
I have her within. You need not fear the house,
It was not visited.
Love. But by me, who came
Sooner than you expected.
Face. It is true, sir. Pray you forgive me.
Love. Well, let's see your widow.

SCENE IV.

SUBTLE, DAPPER, FACE, *and* DOL COMMON.

Sub. How! ha' you eaten your gag?
Dap. Yes, faith, it crumbled
Away i' my mouth.
Sub. You ha' spoiled all, then.
Dap. No,
I hope my aunt of Fairy will forgive me.
Sub. Your aunt's a gracious lady: But in troth
You were to blame.
Dap. The fume did overcome me,
And I did do't to stay my stomach. Pray you
So satisfy her grace. Here comes the captain.
Face. How now! Is his mouth down?
Sub. Ay, he has spoken.
Face. A pox! I heard him, and you too. He's undone then.
I have been fain to say the house is haunted
With spirits, to keep Churl back.
Sub. And hast thou done it?
Face. Sure, for this night.
Sub. Why, then triumph and sing
Of Face so famous, the precious king
Of present wits.
Face. Did you not hear the coil
About the door?
Sub. Yes, and I dwindled with it.
Face. Shew him his aunt, and let him be dispatched:
I'll send her to you.
Sub. Well, sir, your aunt her grace
Will give you audience presently, on my suit,
And the captain's word, that you did not eat your gag,
In any contempt of her highness.
Dap. Not I, in troth, sir.
Sub. Here she is come. Down o' your knees and wriggle.
[DOL *like the queen of Fairy.*
She has a stately presence. Good. Yet nearer,
And bid God save you.
Dap. Madam,—
Sub. And your aunt.
Dap. And my most gracious aunt, God save your grace.
Dol. Nephew, we thought to have been angry with you:
But that sweet face of yours hath turned the tide,
And made it flow with joy, that ebbed of love.
Arise, and touch our velvet gown.
Sub. The skirts, and kiss 'em. So.
Dol. Let me now stroke that head;
Much, nephew, shalt thou win; much shalt thou spend;
Much shalt thou give away; much shalt thou lend.
Sub. Ay, much indeed. Why do you not thank her grace?
Dap. I cannot speak for joy.
Sub. See, the kind wretch!
Your grace's kinsman right.
Dol. Give me the bird.
Here is your fly in a purse about your neck, cousin;
Wear it, and feed it about this day se'enight,
On your right wrist—
Sub. Open a vein with a pin,
And let it suck but once a week; till then,
You must not look on't.
Dol. No; and, kinsman,
Bear yourself worthy of the blood you come on.
Sub. Her grace would ha' you eat no more Wool-sack pies,
Nor Dagger frume'ty.
Dol. Nor break his fast
In heaven and hell.
Sub. She's with you everywhere!
Nor play with costermongers at mum-chance, tray-trip.
God make you rich, (when, as your aunt has done it:) but keep
The gallant'st company, and the best games—
Dap. Yes, sir.
Sub. Gleek and primero: and what you get, be true to us.
Dap. By this hand, I will.
Sub. You may bring's a thousand pound
Before to-morrow night, (if but three thousand
Be stirring) an' you will.
Dap. I swear I will, then.
Sub. Your fly will learn you all games.
Face. Ha' you done there?
Sub. Your grace will command him no more duties?
Dol. No:
But come and see me often. I may chance
To leave him three or four hundred chests of treasure,
And some twelve thousand acres of Fairy-land,
If he game well and comely with good gamesters.
Sub. There's a kind aunt! kiss her departing part.
But you must sell your forty mark a-year now.
Dap. Ay, sir, I mean.
Sub. Or gi't away: pox on't!
Dap. I'll gi't mine aunt. I'll go and fetch the writings.
Sub. 'Tis well, away.
Face. Where's Subtle?

Sub. Here, what news?
Face. Drugger is at the door, go take his suit,
And bid him fetch a parson presently:
Say he shall marry the widow. Now, queen Dol,
Ha' you pack'd up all?
Dol. Yes.
Face. And how do you like
The Lady Pliant?
Dol. A good dull innocent.
Sub. Here's your Hieronimo's cloak and hat.
Face. Give me 'em.
Sub. And the ruff too?
Face. Yes, I'll come to you presently.
Sub. Now he is gone about his project, Dol,
I told you of, for the widow.
Dol. 'Tis direct
Against our articles.
Sub. Well, we'll fit him, wench.
Hast thou gull'd her of her jewels, or her bracelets?
Dol. No, but I will do't.
Sub. Soon at night, my Dolly,
When we are shipt, and all our goods aboard,
Eastward for Ratcliff; we will turn our course
To Brainford, westward, if thou say'st the word:
And take our leaves of this o'erweening rascal,
This peremptory Face.
Dol. Content, I'm weary of him.
Sub. Thou hast cause, when the slave will run a wiving, Dol,
Against the instrument that was drawn between us.
Dol. I'll pluck his bird as bare as I can.
Sub. Yes, tell her,
She must by any means address some present
To th' cunning man; make him amends for wronging
His art with her suspicion; send a ring,
Or chain of pearl; she will be tortur'd else
Extremely in her sleep, say; and ha' strange things
Come to her.—Wilt thou?
Dol. Yes.
Sub. My fine flitter-mouse!
My bird o' the night! we'll tickle it at the Pigeons,
When we have all, and may unlock the trunks,
And say, this's mine, and thine, and thine, and mine——— [*They kiss.*
Face. What now, a billing?
Sub. Yes, a little exalted
In the good passage of our stock-affairs.
Face. Drugger has brought his parson; take him in, Subtle,
And send Nab back again to wash his face.
Sub. I will: And shave himself?
Face. If you can get him.
Dol. You are hot upon it, Face, whate'er it is!
Face. A trick, that Dol shall spend ten pound a month by.
Is he gone?
Sub. The chaplain waits you i' the hall, sir.
Face. I'll go bestow him.
Dol. He'll now marry her instantly.
Sub. He cannot yet, he is not ready. Dear Dol,
Cozen her of all thou canst.—To deceive him
Is no deceit, but justice, that would break
Such an inextricable tie as ours was.
Dol. Let me alone to fit him.
Face. Come, my venturers!
You ha'pack'd up all? Where be the trunks? Bring forth.
Sub. Here.
Face. Let's see 'em. Where's the money?
Sub. Here,
In this.
Face. Mammon's ten pound; eight score before!
The brethren's money this:—Drugger's and Dapper's.—
What paper's that?
Dol. The jewel of the waiting maid's,
That stole it from her lady, to know certain—
Face. If she should have precedence of her mistress?
Dol. Yes.
Face. What box is that?
Sub. The fish-wife's rings, I think;
And th' ale-wife's single money.—Is't not, Dol?
Dol. Yes: and the whistle that the sailor's wife
Brought you.
Face. We'll wet it to-morrow:—And our silver-beakers,
And tavern cups.—Where be the French petticoats,
And girdles, and hangers?
Sub. Here, i' the trunk,
And the bolts of lawn.
Face. Is Drugger's damask there?
And the tobacco?
Sub. Yes.
Face. Give me the keys.
Dol. Why you the keys?
Sub. No matter, Dol; because
We shall not open 'em before he comes.
Face. 'Tis true, you shall not open them, indeed:
Nor have 'em forth. Do you see? Not forth, Dol.
Dol. No!
Face. No, my smock-rampant.—The right is, my master
Knows all, has pardon'd me, and he will keep 'em.
Doctor, 'tis true, you look, for all your figures:
I sent for him, indeed. Wherefore, good partners,
Both he and she, be satisfied: For, here
Determines the *Indenture tripartite*
'Twixt Subtle, Dol, and Face! All I can do
Is to help you over the wall, o'the back-side;
Or lend you sheet to save your velvet-gown, Dol.
Here will be officers presently; bethink you
Of some course suddenly to 'scape the dock;
For thither you'll come else. Hark you, thunder! [*Some knock.*
Sub. You are a precious fiend!
Offi. Open the door.
Face. Dol, I'm sorry for thee, i'faith.—But hear'st thou?
It shall go hard, but I will place thee somewhere:

Thou shalt ha' my letter to mistress Amo.
Dol. Hang you——
Face. Or Madam Cæsarean.
Dol. Pox upon you, rogue!
Would I had but time to beat thee.
Face. Subtle,
Let's know where you set up next; I'll send you
A customer, now and then, for old acquaintance:
What new course ha' you?
Sub. Rogue, I'll hang myself:
That I may walk a greater devil than thou,
And haunt thee i' the flock-bed, and the buttery.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

LOVE-WIT, *Officers*, MAMMON, SURLY, FACE, KASTRIL, ANANIAS, TRIBULATION, DRUGGER, *and Dame* PLIANT.

Love. What do you mean, my masters?
Mam. Open your door,
Cheaters, bawds, conjurers.
Off. Or we'll break it open.
Love. What warrant have you?
Off. Warrant enough, sir, doubt not:
If you'll not open it.
Love. Is there an officer there?
Off. Yes, two or three for failing.
Love. Have but patience,
And I will open it straight.
Face. Sir, ha' you done?
Is it a marriage? perfect?
Love. Yes, my brain.
Face. Off with your ruff and cloak then; be yourself, sir!
Sur. Down with the door.
Kast. 'Slight, ding it open.
Love. Hold, hold, gentlemen!
What means this violence?
Mam. Where is this collar?
Sur. And my captain Face?
Mam. These day-owls.
Sur. That are birding in men's purses.
Mam. Madam Suppository!
Kast. Doxy, my sister.
Ana. Locusts of the foul pit!
Trib. Profane as Bel and the Dragon!
Ana. Worse than the grashoppers, or the lice of Egypt!
Love. Good gentlemen, hear me. Are you officers,
And cannot stay this violence!
Off. Keep the peace!—
Love. Gentlemen, what is the matter? whom do you seek?
Mam. The chemical cozener!
Sur. And the captain Pandar.
Kast. The nun, my sister.
Mam. Madam Rabbi!
Ana. Scorpions and caterpillars!
Love. Fewer at once, I pray you.
Off. One after another, gentlemen, I charge you,
By virtue of my staff——
Ana. They are the vessels
Of pride, lust, and the cart.
Love. Good zeal, lie still
A little while!
Trib. Peace, deacon Ananias!
Love. The house is mine here, and the doors are open:
If there be any such persons as you seek for,
Use your authority, search on o' God's name.
I'm but newly come to town, and finding
This tumult 'bout my door, to tell you true,
It somewhat 'maz'd me; 'till my man here, fearing
My more displeasure, told me he'd done
Somewhat an insolent part, let out my house,
Belike presuming on my known aversion
From any air o' the town, while there was sickness,
To a doctor and a captain; who, what they are,
Or where they be, he knows not.
Mam. Are they gone? [*They enter.*
Love. You may go in and search, sir. Here, I find
The empty walls worse than I left 'em, smok'd,
A few crack'd pots and glasses, and a furnace,
The ceiling fill'd with poesies of the candle:
And madam, with a dildo, writ o' the walls.
Only one gentlewoman I met here,
That is within, that said she was a widow——
Kast. Ay, that's my sister. I'll go thump her. Where is she?
Love. And should ha' married a Spanish count, but he,
When he came to't, neglected her so grossly,
That I, a widower, am gone through with her.
Sur. How! have I lost her then?
Love. Were you the Don, sir?
Good faith, now, she does blame you extremely, and says
You swore, and told her, you had ta'en the pains
To dye your beard, and umbre o'er your face,
Borrow'd a suit and ruff, all for her love!
And then did nothing. What an oversight,
And want of putting forward, sir, was this!
Well-fare, an old harquebuseer yet,
Could prime his powder, and give fire, and hit,
All in a twinkling!—
Mam. The whole nest are fled! [*Coming forth.*
Love. What sort of birds were they?
Mam. A kind of choughs,
Or thievish daws, sir, that have pick'd my purse
Of eightscore and ten pounds within these five weeks,
Beside my first materials; and my goods
That lie i' the cellar: which I'm glad they ha' left.
I may have home yet.
Love. Think you so, sir?
Mam. Ay.
Love. By order of law, sir, but not otherwise.
Mam. Not mine own stuff?
Love. Sir, I can take no knowledge
That they are yours, but by public means.

If you can bring certificate that you were gull'd of 'em,
Or any formal writ out of a court,
That you did cozen yourself, I will not hold them.
Mam. I'll rather lose 'em.
Love. That you shall not, sir,
By me, in troth. Upon these terms they are yours.
What should they ha' been, sir? turn'd into gold all?
Mam. No: I cannot tell.
It may be they should. What then?
Love. What a great loss in hope have you sustain'd!
Mam. Not I, the commonwealth has.
Face. Ay, he would ha' built
The city new, and made a ditch about it
Of silver, should have ran with cream from Hogsdon:
That, every Sunday in Moorfields, the younkers,
And tits, and tomboys, should have fed on gratis.
Mam. I will go mount a turnip-cart, and preach
To the end o' the world, within these two months.
Surly, what! in a dream?
Sur. Must I needs cheat myself,
With that same foolish vice of honesty!
Come, let us go, and hearken out the rogues.
That Face I'll mark for mine, if e'er I meet him.
Face. If I can hear of him, sir, I'll bring you word
Unto your lodging:—for, in troth, they were strangers
To me:—I thought them honest as myself, sir.
Trib. 'Tis well, the saints shall not lose all yet. Go, [*They come forth.*
And get some carts——
Love. For what, my zealous friends?
Ana. To bear away the portion of the righteous
Out of this den of thieves.
Love. What is that portion?
Ana. The goods, sometime the orphans, that the brethren
Bought with their silver pence.
Love. What, those i' the cellar,
The knight sir Mammon claims?
Ana. I do defy
The wicked Mammon, so do all the brethren,
Thou profane man. I ask thee, with what conscience
Thou canst advance that idol against us
That have the seal? Were not the shillings numbered
That made the pounds? Were not the pounds told out
Upon the second day of the fourth week,
In the eighth month, upon the table dormant,
The year of the last patience of the saints
Six hundred and ten?
Love. Mine earnest vehement botcher,
And deacon also, I cannot dispute with you,
But, if you get you not away the sooner,
I shall confute you with a cudgel.
Ana. Sir—
Trib. Be patient, Ananias.
Ana. I am strong,
And will stand up, well girt, against an host
That threaten Gad in exile.
Love. I shall send you
To Amsterdam, to your cellar.
Ana. I will pray there
Against thy house: may dogs defile thy walls,
And wasps and hornets breed beneath thy roof,
This seat of falsehood, and this cave of coz'nage!
Love. Away, you Harry Nicolas, do you talk? [*Beats* DRUGGER *away.*
Face. No, this was Abel Drugger.—Good sir, go [*To the Parson.*
And satisfy him; tell him, all is done:
He staid too long a-washing of his face.
The doctor he shall hear of him at Westchester;
And of the captain, tell him, at Yarmouth; or
Some good port-town else, lying for a wind.—
If you get off the angry child, now, sir——
Kast. Come on, you ewe, you have match'd most sweetly, ha' you not?
Did not I say, I would never ha' you tupp'd [*To his Sister.*
But by a dubb'd boy, to make you a Lady-Tom?
'Slight, you are a mammet! O, I could touse you now.
Death, mun' you marry with a pox!
Love. You lie, boy;
As sound as you; and I'm aforehand with you.
Kast. Anon!
Love. Come, will you quarrel! I will seize you, sirrah.
Why do you not buckle to your tools?
Kast. God's light!
This is a fine old boy as e'er I saw!
Love. What, do you change your copy now? Proceed,
Here stands my dove! stoop at her if you dare.
Kast. 'Slight, I must love him! I cannot chuse, i'faith,
And I should be hang'd for't.—Sister, I protest
I honour thee for this match.
Love. O, do you so, sir?
Kast. Yes; and thou canst take tobacco, and drink, old boy,
I'll give her five hundred pound more to her marriage
Than her own state.
Love. Fill a pipeful, Jeremy.
Face. Yes, but go in, and take it, sir.
Love. We will.
I will be rul'd by thee in any thing, Jeremy.
Kast. 'Slight, thou art not hide-bound! Thou art a jovy boy!—
Come let's in, I pray thee, and take our whiffs.
Love. Whiff in with your sister, brother boy.—
That master
That had receiv'd such happiness by a servant,
In such a widow, and with so much wealth,
Were very ungrateful, if he would not be
A little indulgent to that servant's wit,
And help his fortune, though with some small strain
Of his own candour.—Therefore, gentlemen,

And kind spectators, if I have outstripp'd
An old man's gravity, or strict canon, think
What a young wife and a good brain may do:
Stretch age's truth sometimes, and crack it too.
Speak for thyself, knave!
Face. So I will, sir.—Gentlemen,
My part a little fell in this last scene.
Yet 'twas decorum.—And though I am clean
Got off from Subtle, Surly, Mammon, Dol,
Hot Ananias, Dapper, Drugger,—all
With whom I traded—yet I put myself
On you, that are my country!—and this pelf
Which I have got, if you do quit me, rests
To feast you often, and invite new guests.
[*Exeunt.*

RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE.

BY

FLETCHER.

PROLOGUE.

Pleasure attend ye, and about ye sit
The springs of mirth, fancy, delight and wit!
To stir you up, do not your looks let fall,
Nor to remembrance our late errors call,
Because this day we're Spaniards all again,
The story of our play: and our scene Spain:—
The errors too, do not for this cause hate,
Now we present their wit and not their state.
Nor, ladies! be not angry if you see
A young fresh beauty, wanton and too free,
Seek to abuse her husband;—still 'tis Spain,
No such gross errors in your kingdom reign!—
We are vestals all, and though we blow the fire,
We seldom make it flame up to desire:—
Take no example neither to begin,
For some by precedent delight to sin:
Nor blame the poet if he slip aside,
Sometimes lasciviously, if not too wide,
But hold your fans close, and then smile at ease;
A cruel scene did never lady please.
Nor, gentlemen, pray be not you displeas'd,
Though we present some men fool'd, some diseas'd,
Some drunk, some mad: we mean not you, you're free,
We tax no farther than our comedy.
You are our friends!—sit noble, then, and see.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Duke of MODENA.
DON JUAN DE CASTRO.
MICHAEL PEREZ, *the Copper Captain.*
CACAFOGO, *an Usurer.*
SANCHIO.
ALONSO.

WOMEN.

DONNA MARGARITA, *the Heiress.*
ESTIFANIA, *her Maid, Wife to the Copper Captain.*
CLARA.
First Lady.
Second Lady.
ALTEA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter JUAN DE CASTRO *and* MICHAEL PEREZ.

Mich. ARE your companies full, colonel?
Juan. No, not yet, sir:
Nor will be this month yet, as I reckon;
How rises your command?
Mich. We pick up still, and as our monies hold out,
We have men come: about that time I think
We shall be full too; many young gallants go.
Juan. And unexperienced.
The wars are daisty dreams to young hot spirits,
Time and experience will allay those visions;
We have strange things to fill our numbers.
There's one Don Leon, a strange goodly fellow,
Recommended to me from some noble friends,
For my Alferes; had you but seen his person,
And what a giant's promise it protesteth.
Mich. I have heard of him, and that he hath serv'd before too.
Juan. But no harm done, nor never meant, Don Michael,
That came to my ears yet; ask him a question,
He blushes like a girl, and answers little,
To the point less; he wears a sword, a good one,
And good clothes too, he is whole skinn'd, has no hurt yet,
Good promising hopes; I never yet heard certainly
Of any gentleman that saw him angry.
Mich. Preserve him, he'll conclude a peace, if need be;
Many as strong as he will go along with us,
That swear as valiantly as heart can wish,
Their mouths charg'd with six oaths at once, and whole ones,
That make the drunken Dutch creep into molehills.
Juan. 'Tis true, such we must look for: but Michael Perez,
When heard you of Donna Margarita, the great heiress?
Mich. I hear every hour of her, though I never saw her,
She is the main discourse: noble Don Juan de Castro,
How happy were that man could catch this wench up,
And live at ease! she is fair, and young, and wealthy.
Infinite wealthy, and as gracious too
In all her entertainments, as men report.
Juan. But she is proud, sir, that I know for certain.
And that comes seldom without wantonness.
He that shall marry her, must have a rare hand.
Mich. Would I were married, I would find that wisdom,
With a light rein to rule my wife: if ever woman
Of the most subtile mould went beyond me,
I would give the boys leave to hoot me out o' th' parish.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, there be two gentlewomen attend to speak
With you.
Juan. Wait on 'em in.
Mich. Are they two handsome women?
Serv. They seem so, very handsome, but they are veil'd, sir.
Mich. Thou put'st sugar in my mouth, how it melts with me!
I love a sweet young wench.
Juan. Wait on them in, I say. [*Exit Serv.*
Mich. Don Juan.
Juan. How you itch, Michael! how you burnish!
Will not this soldier's heat out of your bones yet?
Do your eyes glow now?
Mich. There be two.
Juan. Say honest, what shame have you then?
Mich. I would fain see that;
I have been in the Indies twice, and have seen strange things,
But two honest women!——one I read of once.
Juan. Prithee, be modest.
Mich. I'll be any thing.

Enter Servant, Donna CLARA, *and* ESTIFANIA, *veiled.*

Juan. You are welcome, ladies.
Mich. Both hooded! I like 'em well though:
They come not for advice in law sure hither;
May be they would learn to raise the pike.
I am for 'em: they are very modest, 'tis a fine preludium.
Juan. With me, or with this gentleman,
Would you speak, lady?
Clara. With you, sir, as I guess, Juan de Castro.
Mich. Her curtain opens, she is a pretty gentlewoman.
Juan. I am the man, and shall be bound to fortune,
I may do any service to your beauties.
Clara. Captain, I hear you are marching down to Flanders,
To serve the catholic king.
Juan. I am, sweet lady.
Clara. I have a kinsman, and a noble friend,
Employ'd in those wars; may be, sir, you know him,
Don Campusano, captain of carbines,
To whom I would request your nobleness,
To give this poor remembrance. [*A letter.*
Juan. I shall do it,
I know the gentleman, a most worthy captain.
Clara. Something in private.

Juan. Step aside, I'll serve thee.
[*Exeunt* JUAN *and* CLARA.
Mich. Prithee let me see thy face.
Estif. Sir, you must pardon me;
Women of our sort, that maintain fair memories,
And keep suspect off from their chastities,
Had need wear thicker veils.
Mich. I am no blaster of a lady's beauty,
Nor bold intruder on her special favours;
I know how tender reputation is,
And with what guards it ought to be preserved, lady.
You may to me.
Estif. You must excuse me, seignior, I come
Not here to sell myself.
Mich. As I am a gentleman! By the honour of a soldier—
Estif. I believe you.
I pray you be civil; I believe you would see me,
And when you have seen me, I believe you will like me;
But in a strange place, to a stranger too,
As if I came on purpose to betray you:
Indeed I will not.
Mich. I shall love you dearly,
And 'tis a sin to fling away affection;
I have no mistress, no desire to honour
Any but you: (will not this oyster open?)
I know not, you have struck me with your modesty
(She will draw sure;) so deep, and taken from me
All the desire I might bestow on others:
Quickly, before they come.
Estif. Indeed I dare not:
But since I see you are so desirous, sir,
To view a poor face that can merit nothing
But your repentance—
Mich. It must needs be excellent.
Estif. And with what honesty you ask it of me,
When I am gone, let your man follow me,
And view what house I enter; thither come,
For there I dare be bold to appear open:
And as I like your virtuous carriage then,

Enter JUAN, CLARA, *a Servant.*

I shall be able to give welcome to you.
She has done her business, I must take my leave, sir.
Mich. I'll kiss your fair white hand, and thank you, lady.
My man shall wait, and I shall be your servant.
Sirrah, come near; hark.
Serv. I shall do it faithfully. [*Exit.*
Juan. You will command me no more services?
Clara. To be careful of your noble health, dear sir,
That I may ever honour you.
Juan. I thank you,
And kiss your hands. Wait on the ladies down there. [*Exeunt Ladies and Servants.*
Mich. You had the honour to see the face that came to you?
Juan. And 'twas a fair one: what was yours, Don Michael?
Mich. Mine was i' th' 'clipse, and had a cloud drawn over it:
But I believe well, and I hope 'tis handsome.
She had a hand would stir a holy hermit.
Juan. You know none of 'em?
Mich. No.
Juan. Then I do, captain;
But I'll say nothing till I see the proof on't.
Sit close, Don Perez, or your worship's caught:
I fear a fly.
Mich. Were those she brought love-letters?
Juan. A packet to a kinsman now in Flanders:
Yours was very modest, methought.
Mich. Some young unmanaged thing;
But I may live to see—
Juan. 'Tis worth experience.
Let's walk abroad and view our companies.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter SANCHIO *and* ALONZO.

Sanch. What, are you for the wars, Alonzo?
Alon. It may be ay,
It may be no, e'en as the humour takes me.
If I find peace amongst the female creatures,
And easy entertainment, I'll stay at home.
I am not so far obliged yet to long marches
And mouldy biscuit, to run mad for honour:
When you are all gone, I have my choice before me.
Sanch. Of which hospital thou wilt sweat in: wilt thou
Never leave whoring?
Alon. There is less danger in't than gunning, Sanchio:
Though we be shot sometimes, the shot's not mortal,
Besides, it breaks no limbs.
Sanch. But it disables 'em:
Dost thou see how thou pull'st thy legs after thee, as they
Hung by points?
Alon. Better to pull 'em thus than walk on wooden ones:
Serve bravely for a billet to support me.
Sanch. Fy, fy, 'tis base.
Alon. Dost thou count it base to suffer?
Suffer abundantly? 'tis the crown of honour;
You think it nothing to lie twenty days
Under a surgeon's hands that has no mercy.
Sanch. As thou hast done, I am sure: but I perceive now
Why you desire to stay; the orient heiress,
The Margarita, sir.
Alon. I would I had her.
Sanch. They say she will marry.
Alon. I think she will.
Sanch. And marry suddenly, as report goes too.
She fears her youth will not hold out, Alonzo.
Alon. I would I had the sheathing on't.
Sanch. They say too,
She has a greedy eye, that must be fed
With more than one man's meat.
Alon. Would she were mine,
I would cater for her well enough: but, Sanchio,

There be too many great men that adore her,
Princes, and princes' fellows, that claim privilege.
Sanch. Yet those stand off i' the way of marriage.
To be tied to a man's pleasure is a second labour.
Alon. She has bought a brave house here in town.
Sanch. I have heard so.
Alon. If she convert it now to pious uses,
And bid poor gentlemen welcome!
Sanch. When comes she to it?
Alon. Within these two days: she is in the country yet,
And keeps the noblest house.
Sanch. Then there's some hope of her.
Wilt thou go my way?
Alon. No, no, I must leave you,
And repair to an old gentlewoman
That has credit with her, that can speak a good word.
Sanch. Send thee good fortune, but make thy body sound first.
Alon. I am a soldier,
And too sound a body becomes me not.
Farewell, Sanchio. [*Exeunt.*

Enter a Servant of MICHAEL PEREZ.

Serv. 'Tis this or that house, or I have lost my aim;
They are both fair buildings; she walked plaguy fast,

Enter ESTIFANIA.

And hereabouts I lost her: stay, that's she,
'Tis very she—she makes me a low court'sy;
Let me note the place, the street I will remember.
[*Exit* ESTIF.
She is in again; certain some noble lady.
How happy should I be if she love my master:
A wond'rous goodly house! here are brave lodgings,
And I shall sleep now like an emperor,
And eat abundantly: I thank my fortune,
I'll back with speed, and bring him happy tidings.
[*Exit.*

Enter three old Ladies.

1 *Lady.* What should it mean, that in such haste
We are sent for?
2 *Lady.* Belike the lady Margaret has some business
She would break to us in private.
3 *Lady.* It should seem so.
'Tis a good lady, and a wise young lady.
2 *Lady.* And virtuous enough too, I warrant ye,
For a young woman of her years; 'tis a pity
To load her tender age with too much virtue.
3 *Lady.* 'Tis more sometimes than we can well away with.

Enter ALTEA.

Alt. Good morrow, ladies.
All. 'Morrow, my good madam.
1 *Lady.* How does the sweet young beauty, lady Margaret?
2 *Lady.* Has she slept well after her walk last night?
1 *Lady.* Are her dreams gentle to her mind?
Alt. All's well,
She's very well; she sent for you thus suddenly,
To give her counsel in a business
That much concerns her.
2 *Lady.* She does well and wisely,
To ask the counsel of the ancient'st, madam;
Our years have run through many things she knows not.
Alt. She would fain marry.
1 *Lady.* 'Tis a proper calling,
And well beseems her years. Who would she yoke with?
Alt. That's left to argue on; I pray come in
And break your fast, drink a good cup or two,
To strengthen your understandings, then she'll tell you.
2 *Lady.* And good wine breeds good counsel;
We'll yield to ye. [*Exeunt.*

Enter JUAN DE CASTRO *and* LEON.

Juan. Have you seen any service?
Leon. Yes.
Juan. Where?
Leon. Everywhere.
Juan. What office bore ye?
Leon. None, I was not worthy.
Juan. What captains know you?
Leon. None, they were above me.
Juan. Were you never hurt?
Leon. Not that I well remember;
But once I stole a hen, and then they beat me:
Pray ask me no long questions, I have an ill memory.
Juan. This is an ass; did you never draw your sword yet?
Leon. Not to do any harm, I thank Heaven for't.
Juan. Nor ne'er ta'en prisoner?
Leon. No, I ran away;
For I had ne'er no money to redeem me.
Juan. Can you endure a drum?
Leon. It makes my head ache.
Juan. Are you not valiant when you are drunk?
Leon. I think not, but I am loving, sir.
Juan. What a lump is this man!
Was your father wise?
Leon. Too wise for me, I'm sure,
For he gave all he had to my younger brother.
Juan. That was no foolish part, I'll bear you witness.
Canst thou lie with a woman?
Leon. I think I could make shift, sir,
But I am bashful.
Juan. In the night?
Leon. I know not,
Darkness indeed may do some good upon me.
Juan. Why art thou sent to me to be my officer,
Ay, and commended too, when thou dar'st not fight?

Leon. There be more officers of my opinion,
Or I am cozened, sir, men that talk more too.
Juan. How wilt thou 'scape a bullet?
Leon. Why, by chance:
They aim at honourable men; alas, I am none, sir.
Juan. This fellow has some doubts in's talk that strike me;

Enter ALONZO.

He cannot be all fool. Welcome, Alonzo.
Alon. What have you got there, temperance into your company?
The spirit of peace? we shall have wars

Enter CACAFOGO.

By th' ounce then. O here's another pumpion,
Let him loose for luck's sake, the crammed son
Of a starved usurer, Cacafogo; both their brains buttered,
Cannot make two spoonfuls.
Caca. My father's dead: I am a man of war too,
Monies, demesnes: I have ships at sea too,
Captains.
Juan. Take heed o' th' Hollanders; your ships may leak else.
Caca. I scorn the Hollanders, they are my drunkards.
Alon. Put up your gold, sir, I'll borrow it else.
Caca. I am satisfied, you shall not.
Come out, I know thee, meet mine anger instantly.
Leon. I never wrong'd ye.
Caca. Thou hast wrong'd mine honour,
Thou look'd'st upon my mistress thrice lasciviously,
I'll make it good.
Juan. Do not heat yourself, you will surfeit.
Caca. Thou won'st my money too, with a pair of base bones,
In whom there was no truth, for which I beat thee,
I beat thee much, now I will hurt thee dangerously.
This shall provoke thee. [*He strikes.*
Alon. You struck too low by a foot, sir.
Juan. You must get a ladder when you would beat
This fellow.
Leon. I cannot chuse but kick again; pray pardon me. [*Kicks him.*
Caca. Hadst thou not ask'd my pardon, I had kill'd thee.
I leave thee as a thing despis'd, *assoles manus a vostra siniare a Maistre.* [*Exit* CAC.
Alon. You have 'scap'd by miracle; there is not in all Spain
A spirit of more fury than this fire-drake.
Leon. I see he is hasty, and I would give him leave
To beat me soundly, if he would take my bond.
Juan. What shall I do with this fellow?
Alon. Turn him off;
He will infect the camp with cowardice,
If he go with thee.
Juan. About some week hence, sir,
If I can hit upon no abler officer,
You shall hear from me.
Leon. I desire no better. [*Exit.*

Enter ESTIFANIA *and* PEREZ.

Per. You have made me now too bountiful amends, lady,
For your strict carriage when you saw me first:
These beauties were not meant to be conceal'd,
It was a wrong to hide so sweet an object.
I could now chide ye, but it shall be thus,
No other anger ever touch your sweetness.
Estif. You appear to me so honest, and so civil,
Without a blush, sir, I dare bid you welcome.
Per. Now let me ask your name.
Estif. 'Tis Estifania, the heir of this poor place.
Per. Poor do you call it?
There's nothing that I cast mine eyes upon,
But shews both rich and admirable; all the rooms
Are hung as if a princess were to dwell here;
The gardens, orchards, every thing so curious:
Is all that plate your own too?
Estif. 'Tis but little,
Only for present use; I have more and richer,
When need shall call, or friends compel me use it.
The suits you see, of all the upper chambers,
Are those that commonly adorn the house.
I think I have besides, as fair as Seville,
Or any town in Spain can parallel.
Per. Now if she be not married, I have some hopes.
Are you a maid?
Estif. You make me blush to answer;
I ever was accounted so to this hour,
And that's the reason that I live retir'd, sir.
Per. Then would I counsel you to marry presently,
(If I can get her I am made for ever)
For every year you lose, you lose a beauty.
A husband now, an honest careful husband,
Were such a comfort: will you walk above stairs?
Estif. This place will fit our talk, 'tis fitter far, sir;
Above there are day-beds, and such temptations
I dare not trust, sir.
Per. She is excellent wise withal too.
Estif. You nam'd a husband; I am not so strict, sir,
Nor tied unto a virgin's solitariness,
But if an honest, and a noble one,
Rich, and a soldier, for so I have vowed he shall be,
Were offer'd me, I think I should accept him;
But, above all, he must love.
Per. He were base, else.
There's comfort ministered in the word soldier.
How sweetly should I live!
Estif. I am not so ignorant, but that I know well,

How to be commanded,
And how again to make myself obey'd, sir.
I waste but little, I have gather'd much;
My rial not the less worth, when 'tis spent,
If spent by my direction, to please my husband.
I hold it as indifferent in my duty,
To be his maid i' th' kitchen, or his cook,
As in the hall to know myself the mistress.
Per. Sweet, rich, and provident; now, fortune, stick
To me! I am a soldier, and a bachelor, lady,
And such a wife as you I could love infinitely.
They that use many words, some are deceitful.
I long to be a husband, and a good one,
For 'tis most certain I shall make a precedent
For all that follow me, to love their ladies.
I am young, you see, able I would have you think too;
If 't please you know, try me before you take me.
'Tis true I shall not meet in equal wealth
With thee, but jewels, chains, such as the war
Has given me, a thousand ducats I dare
Presume on in ready gold, now as your
Care may handle it; as rich clothes too, as
Any he bears arms, lady.
Estif. You are a true gentleman, and fair, I see by ye,
And such a man I had rather take—
Per. Pray do so, I'll have a priest o' th' sudden.
Estif. And as suddenly you will repent too.
Per. I'll be hang'd or drown'd first,
By this, and this, and this kiss.
Estif. You are a flatterer;
But I must say there was something when I saw you
First, in that most noble face, that stirr'd my fancy.
Per. I'll stir it better ere you sleep, sweet lady:
I'll send for all my trunks, and give up all to ye,
Into your own dispose, before I bed ye,
And then, sweet wench—
Estif. You have the art to cozen me.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter MARGARITA, *two Ladies, and* ALTEA.

Marg. Sit down, and give me your opinions seriously.
1 *Lady.* You say you have a mind to marry, lady.
Marg. 'Tis true, I have, for to preserve my credit;
Yet not so much for that as for my state, ladies,
Conceive me right, there lies the main o' th' question;
Credit I can redeem, money will imp it.
But when my money's gone, when the law shall
Seize that, and for incontinency strip me
Of all—
1 *Lady.* Do you find your body so malicious that way?
Marg. I find it as all bodies are that are young and lusty,
Lazy, and high-fed; I desire my pleasure,
And pleasure I must have.
2 *Lady.* 'Tis fit you should have,
Your years require it, and 'tis necessary,
As necessary as meat to a young lady;
Sleep cannot nourish more.
1 *Lady.* But might not all this be, and keep ye single?
You take away variety in marriage,
The abundance of the pleasure you are barr'd then:
Is't not abundance that ye aim at?
Marg. Yes, why was I made a woman?
2 *Lady.* And every day a new?
Marg. Why fair and young but to use it?
1 *Lady.* You are still i' th' right; why would you marry then?
Alt. Because a husband stops all doubts in this point,
And clears all passages.
2 *Lady.* What husband mean ye?
Alt. A husband of an easy faith, a fool,
Made by her wealth, and moulded to her pleasure;
One, though he see himself become a monster,
Shall hold the door, and entertain the maker.
2 *Lady.* You grant there may be such a man.
1 *Lady.* Yes marry, but how to bring 'em to this rare
Perfection.
2 *Lady.* They must be chosen so, things of no honour,
Nor outward honesty.
Marg. No, 'tis no matter,
I care not what they are, so they be lusty.
2 *Lady.* Methinks now a rich lawyer, some such fellow,
That carries credit, and a face of awe,
But lies with nothing but his clients' business.
Marg. No, there's no trusting them, they are too subtle,
The law has moulded 'em of natural mischief.
1 *Lady.* Then some grave governor,
Some man of honour, yet an easy man.
Marg. If he have honour I am undone, I'll none such;
I'll have have a lusty man, honour will cloy me.
Alt. 'Tis fit ye should, lady;
And to that end, with search and wit and labour,
I have found one out, a right one and a perfect.
He is made as strong as brass, is of brave years too,

And doughty of complexion.
Marg. Is he a gentleman?
Alt. Yes, and a soldier, as gentle as you would wish him,
A good fellow, wears good clothes.
Marg. Those I'll allow him,
They are for my credit; does he understand
But little?
Alt. Very little.
Marg. 'Tis the better.
Have not the wars bred him up to anger.
Alt. No, he will not quarrel with a dog that bites him;
Let him be drunk or sober, is one silence.
Marg. H'as no capacity what honour is?
For that's the soldier's god.
Alt. Honour's a thing too subtle for his wisdom;
If honour lie in eating, he is right honourable.
Marg. Is he so goodly a man, do you say?
Alt. As you shall see, lady;
But to all this is but a trunk.
Marg. I would have him so,
I shall add branches to him to adorn him.
Go, find me out this man, and let me see him.
If he be that motion that you tell me of,
And make no more noise, I shall entertain him.
Let him be here.
Alt. He shall attend your ladyship.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter JUAN, ALONZO, *and* PEREZ.

Juan. Why, thou art not married indeed?
Per. No, no, pray think so.
Alas, I am a fellow of no reckoning,
Not worth a lady's eye.
Alon. Wouldst thou steal a fortune,
And make none of all thy friends acquainted with it,
Nor bid us to thy wedding?
Per. No indeed,
There was no wisdom in't to bid an artist,
An old seducer to a female banquet:
I can cut up my pie without your instructions.
Juan. Was it the wench i' th' veil?
Per. Basto; 'twas she,
The prettiest rogue that e'er you look'd upon,
The loving'st thief.
Juan. And is she rich withal too?
Per. A mine, a mine, there is no end of wealth, colonel.
I am an ass, a bashful fool! Prithee, colonel,
How do thy companies fill now?
Juan. You are merry, sir;
You intend a safer war at home belike now.
Per. I do not think I shall fight much this year, colonel;
I find myself given to my ease a little.
I care not if I sell my foolish company,
They are things of hazard.
Alon. How it angers me,
This fellow at first sight should win a lady,
A rich young wench, and I that have consum'd
My time and art in searching out their subtleties,
Like a fool'd alchemist blow up my hopes still!
When shall we come to thy house, and be freely merry?
Per. When I have manag'd her a little more;
I have an house to entertain an army.
Alon. If thy wife be fair, thou wilt have few less
Come to thee.
Per. But where they'd get entertainment is the point, signior.
I beat no drum.
Alon. You need none but her tabor.
Per. May be I'll march after a month or two,
To get me a fresh stomach. I find, colonel,
A wantonness in wealth, methinks I agree not with;
'Tis such a trouble to be married too,
And have a thousand things of great importance,
Jewels, and plate, and fooleries molest me,
To have a man's brains whimsied with his wealth:
Before, I walk'd contentedly.

Enter Servant.

Serv. My mistress, sir, is sick, because you are absent,
She mourns, and will not eat.
Per. Alas, my jewel!
Come, I'll go with thee. Gentlemen, your fair leaves;
You see I'm tied a little to my yoke.
Pray pardon me; would ye had both such loving wives! [*Exeunt* PEREZ *and Servant.*
Juan. I thank ye
For your old boots. Never be blank, Alonzo,
Because this fellow has outstript thy fortune;
Tell me ten days hence what he is, and how
The gracious state of matrimony stands with him.
Come, let's to dinner; when Margarita comes,
We'll visit both, it may be then your fortune.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter MARGARITA, ALTEA, *and Ladies.*

Marg. Is he come?
Alt. Yes, madam, he has been here this half hour;
I have question'd him of all you can ask him,
And find him as fit as you had made the man;
He will make the goodliest shadow for iniquity.
Marg. Have ye searched him, ladies?
Omnes. He's a man at all points, a likely man.
Marg. Call him in, Altea. [*Exit Lady.*

Enter LEON, ALTEA.

A man of a good presence; pray ye come this way:
Of a lusty body; is his mind so tame?
Alt. Pray ye question him, and if you find him not
Fit for your purpose, shake him off, there's no harm done.
Marg. Can you love a young lady? How he blushes!
Altea. Leave twirling of your hat, and hold your head up,
And speak to th' lady.
Leon. Yes, I think I can.
I must be taught; I know not what it means, madam.

Marg. You shall be taught. And can you, when she pleases,
Go ride abroad, and stay a week or two?
You shall have men and horses to attend ye,
And money in your purse.
Leon. Yes, I love riding,
And when I am from home I am so merry!
Marg. Be as merry as you will; can you as handsomely
When you are sent for back, come with obedience,
And do your duty to the lady loves you?
Leon. Yes, sure, I shall.
Marg. And when you see her friends here,
Or noble kinsmen, can you entertain
Their servants in the cellar, and be busied,
And hold your peace, whate'er you see or hear of?
Leon. 'Twere fit I were hang'd else.
Marg. Let me try your kisses.
How the fool shakes! I will not eat ye, sir.
Beshrew my heart, he kisses wondrous manly!
Can ye do any thing else?
Leon. Indeed, I know not;
But if your ladyship will please to instruct me,
Sure I shall learn.
Marg. You shall then be instructed.
If I should be this lady that affects ye,
Nay, say I marry ye—
Alt. Hark to the lady.
Marg. What money have ye?
Leon. None, madam, nor friends.
I would do any thing to serve your ladyship.
Marg. You must not look to be my master, sir,
Nor talk i' th' house as though you wore the breeches,
No, nor command in any thing.
Leon. I will not,
Alas, I am not able; I have no wit, madam.
Marg. Nor do not labour to arrive at any,
'Twill spoil your head; I take ye upon charity,
And like a servant ye must be unto me;
As I behold your duty I shall love ye,
And, as you observe me, I may chance lie with ye.
Can you mark these?
Leon. Yes, indeed, forsooth.
Marg. There is one thing,
That if I take ye in, I put ye from me,
Utterly from me, you must not be saucy,
No, nor at any time familiar with me,
Scarce know me, when I call ye not.
Leon. I will not; alas, I never knew myself sufficiently.
Marg. Nor must not now.
Leon. I'll be a dog to please ye.
Marg. Indeed you must fetch and carry as I appoint ye.
Leon. I were to blame else.
Marg. Kiss me again;—a strong fellow,
There is vigour in his lips: if you see me
Kiss any other, twenty in an hour, sir,
You must not start, nor be offended.
Leon. No, if you kiss a thousand I shall be contented,
It will the better teach me how to please ye.
Alt. I told ye, madam.
Marg. 'Tis the man I wish'd for; the less you speak—
Leon. I'll never speak again, madam,
But when you charge me; then I'll speak softly too.
Marg. Get me a priest, I'll wed him instantly;
But when you are married, sir, you must wait
Upon me, and see you observe my laws.
Leon. Else you shall hang me.
Marg. I'll give you better clothes when you deserve 'em.
Come in, and serve for witnesses.
Omnes. We shall, madam.
Marg. And then away to th' city presently,
I'll to my new house and new company.
Leon. A thousand crowns are thine, and I am a made man.
Alt. Do not break out too soon.
Leon. I know my time, wench. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CLARA *and* ESTIFANIA, *with a Paper.*

Cla. What, have you caught him?
Estif. Yes.
Cla. And do you find him
A man of those hopes that you aim'd at?
Estif. Yes too,
And the most kind man, and the ablest also
To give a wife content; he is sound as old wine,
And to his soundness rises on the palate,
And there's the man; I find him rich too, Clara.
Cla. Hast thou married him?
Estif. What, dost thou think I fish without a bait, wench?
I bob for fools; he is mine own, I have him:
I told thee what would tickle him like a trout,
And as I cast it, so I caught him daintily,
And all he has I have 'stow'd at my devotion.
Cla. Does thy lady know this? she is coming now to town,
Now to live here in this house.
Estif. Let her come;
She shall be welcome, I am prepar'd for her;
She is mad sure, if she be angry at my fortune,
For what I have made bold.
Cla. Dost thou not love him?
Estif. Yes, entirely well,
As long as there he stays and looks no farther
Into my ends; but when he doubts, I hate him,
And that wise hate will teach me how to cozen him:
A lady tames he, and reads men warnings,
How to decline their wives, and curb their manners,
To put a stern and strong rein to their natures,
And holds he is an ass not worth acquaintance,
That cannot mould a devil to obedience.
I owe him a good turn for these opinions,
And as I find his temper I may pay him.

Enter PEREZ.

O, here he is; now you shall see a kind man.
Per. My Estifania, shall we to dinner, lamb?
I know thou stay'st for me.
Estif. I cannot eat else.
Per. I never enter, but methinks a paradise
Appears about me.

Estif. You are welcome to it, sir.
Per. I think I have the sweetest seat in Spain, wench,
Methinks the richest too; we'll eat i' th' garden
In one o' th' arbours, there 'tis cool and pleasant,
And have our wine cool'd in the running fountain.
Who's that?
Estif. A friend of mine, sir.
Per. Of what breeding?
Estif. A gentlewoman, sir.
Per. What business has she?
Is she a learned woman i' th' mathematics,
Can she tell fortunes?
Estif. More than I know, sir.
Per. Or has she e'er a letter from a kinswoman,
That must be delivered in my absence, wife;
Or comes she from the doctor to salute ye,
And learn your health? she looks not like a confessor.
Estif. What needs all this? why are you troubled, sir?
What do you suspect? she cannot cuckold ye,
She is a woman, sir, a very woman.
Per. Your very woman may do very well, sir,
Toward the matter; for though she cannot perform it
In her own person, she may do it by proxy:
Your rarest jugglers work still by conspiracy.
Estif. Cry you mercy, husband, you are jealous then,
And happily suspect me?
Per. No, indeed, wife.
Estif. Methinks you should not till you have more cause,
And clearer too: I am sure you have heard say, husband,
A woman forced will free herself through iron.
A happy, calm, and good wife, discontented,
May be taught tricks.
Per. No, no, I do but jest with ye.
Estif. To-morrow, friend, I'll see you.
Cla. I shall leave ye
Till then, and pray all may go sweetly with ye. [*Exit.*
Estif. Why, where's this girl, who's at the door? [*Knock.*
Per. Who knocks there?
Is't for the king, ye come, you knock so boisterously?
Look to the door.

Enter Maid.

Maid. My lady, as I live, mistress! my lady's come.
She's at the door, I peept through, and I saw her,
And a stately company of ladies with her.
Estif. This was a week too soon; but I must meet with her,
And set a new wheel going, and a subtle one;
Must blind this mighty Mars, or I am ruin'd.
Per. What are they at door?
Estif. Such, my Michael,
As you may bless the day they enter'd there,
Such for our good.
Per. 'Tis well.
Estif. Nay, 'twill be better
If you will let me but dispose the business,
And be a stranger to it, and not disturb me.
What have I now to do but to advance your fortune?
Per. Do, I dare trust thee; I am asham'd I was angry,
I find thee a wise young wife.
Estif. I'll wise your worship
Before I leave ye;—pray ye walk by and say nothing,
Only salute them, and leave the rest to me, sir.
I was born to make ye a man.
Per. The rogue speaks heartily,
Her good will colours in her cheeks; I am born to love her.
I must be gentler to these tender natures,
A soldier's rude harsh words befit not ladies,
Nor must we talk to them as we talk to
Our officers. I'll give her way, for 'tis for me she
Works now; I am husband, heir, and all she has.

Enter MARGARITA, LEON, ALTEA, *and other Ladies.*

Who are these? what flaunting things? a woman
Of rare presence! excellent fair! this is too big
For a bawdy-house, too open seated too.
Estif. My husband, lady.
Marg. You have gain'd a proper man.
Per. Whate'er I am, I am your servant, lady. [*Kisses.*
Estif. Sir, be rul'd now,
And I shall make ye rich: this is my cousin;
That gentleman dotes on her, even to death; see how he observes her.
Per. She is a goodly woman.
Estif. She is a mirror,
But she is poor; she were for a prince's side else.
This house she has brought him to, as to her own;
And presuming upon me, and upon my courtesy;—
Conceive me short,—he knows not but she is wealthy,
Or if he did know otherwise, 'twere all one,
He is so far gone.
Per. Forward. She has a rare face.
Estif. This we must carry with discretion, husband,
And yield unto her for four days.
Per. Yield our house up, our goods and wealth?
Estif. All this is but in seeming,
To milk the lover on; do you see this writing;
Two hundred pounds a-year when they are married
Has she sealed to for our good; the time's unfit now,
I'll shew it you to-morrow.
Per. All the house?
Estif. All, all; and we'll remove too, to confirm him.
They'll into the country suddenly again
After they are match'd, and then she'll open to him.
Per. The whole possession, wife? look what you do.
A part o' th' house—

Estif. No, no, they shall have all,
And take their pleasure too, 'tis for our 'vantage.
Why, what's four days? had you a sister, sir,
A niece or mistress that required this courtesy,
And should I make a scruple to do you good?
Per. If easily it would come back.
Estif. I swear, sir,
As easily as it came on; is't not a pity
To let such a gentlewoman for a little help?
You give away no house.
Per. Clear but that question.
Estif. I'll put the writings into your hand.
Per. Well then.
Estif. And you shall keep them safe.
Per. I am satisfied; would I had the wench so too.
Estif. When she has married him,
So infinite his love is link'd unto her,
You, I, or any one that helps at this pinch
May have—Heaven knows what.
Per. I'll remove the goods straight,
And take some poor house by, 'tis but for four days.
Estif. I have a poor old friend; there we'll be.
Per. 'Tis well then.
Estif. Go handsome off, and leave the house clear.
Per. Well.
Estif. That little stuff we'll use shall follow after;
And a boy to guide ye: peace, and we are made both.
Marg. Come, let's go in; are all the rooms kept sweet, wench?
Estif. They are sweet and neat. [*Exit* PER.
Marg. Why, where's your husband?
Estif. Gone, madam;
When you come to your own, he must give place, lady.
Marg. Well, send you joy; you would not let me know't,
Yet I shall not forget ye.
Estif. Thank your ladyship. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter MARGARITA, ALTEA, *and Boy.*

Alt. ARE you at ease now? is your heart at rest,
Now you have got a shadow, an umbrella
To keep the scorching world's opinion
From your fair credit?
Marg. I am at peace, Altea;
If he continue but the same he shews,
And be a master of that ignorance
He outwardly professes, I am happy:
The pleasure I shall live in, and the freedom,
Without the squint-eye of the law upon me,
Or prating liberty of tongues, that envy.
Alt. You are a made woman.
Marg. But if he should prove now
A crafty and dissembling kind of husband,
One read in knavery, and brought up in the art
Of villany conceal'd?
Alt. My life, an innocent.
Marg. That's it I aim at;
That's it I hope too, then I am sure I rule him;
For innocents are like obedient children,
Brought up under a hard mother-in-law, a cruel,
Who being not us'd to breakfasts and collations,
When they have coarse bread offer'd 'em, are thankful,
And take it for a favour too. Are the rooms
Made ready to entertain my friends? I long to dance now,
And to be wanton; let me have a song; is the great couch up
The duke of Medina sent?
Alt. 'Tis up and ready.
Marg. And day-beds in all chambers?
Alt. In all, lady;
Your house is nothing now but various pleasures,
The gallants begin to gaze too.
Marg. Let 'em gaze on!
I was brought up a courtier, high and happy,
And company is my delight, and courtship,
And handsome servants at my will: where's my good husband,
Where does he wait?
Alt. He knows his distance, madam;
I warrant ye, he is busy in the cellar
Amongst his fellow servants, or asleep,
Till your command awake him.

Enter LEON.

Marg. 'Tis well, Altea;
It should be so; my ward I must preserve him—
Who sent for him? how dare he come uncall'd for?
His bonnet on too!
Alt. Sure he sees you not.
Marg. How scornful he looks!
Leon. Are all the chambers
Deck'd and adorn'd thus for my lady's pleasure?
New hangings every hour for entertainment,
And new plate bought, new jewels to give lustre?
Serv. They are, and yet there must be more and richer,
It is her will.
Leon. Hum, is it so? 'tis excellent.
It is her will too, to have feasts and banquets,
Revels and masques?
Serv. She ever lov'd 'em dearly;
And we shall have the bravest house kept now, sir—
I must not call you master, she has warn'd me,
Nor must not put my hat off to ye.

Leon. 'Tis no fashion:
What though I be her husband, I am your fellow.
I may cut first?
Ser. That's as you shall deserve, sir.
Leon. And when I lie with her—
Ser. May be I'll light ye;
On the same point, you may do me that service.

Enter first Lady.

1 *Lady.* Madam, the duke Medina, with some captains,
Will come to dinner, and have sent rare wine,
And their best services.
Marg. They shall be welcome;
See all be ready in the noblest fashion,
The house perfumed; now I shall take my pleasure,
And not my neighbour justice maunder at me.
Go, get your best clothes on; but till I call ye,
Be sure ye be not seen. Dine with the gentlewomen,
And behave yourself cleanly, sir, 'tis for my credit.

Enter second Lady.

2 *Lady.* Madam, the lady Julia,—
Leon. That's a bawd,
A three-piled bawd, bawd-major to the army.
2 *Lady.* Has brought her coach to wait upon your ladyship,
And to be informed if you will take the air this morning.
Leon. The neat air of her nunnery.
Marg. Tell her, no; i' th' afternoon I'll call on her.
2 *Lady.* I will, madam. [*Exit.*
Marg. Why are not you gone to prepare yourself?
May be you shall be sewer to the first course.
A portly presence! Altea, he looks lean;
'Tis a wash knave; he will not keep his flesh well.
Alt. A willing, madam, one that needs no spurring.
Leon. Faith, madam, in my little understanding,
You had better entertain your honest neighbours,
Your friends about ye, that may speak well of ye,
And give a worthy mention of your bounty.
Marg. How now, what's this?
Leon. 'Tis only to persuade ye,
Courtiers are but fickle things to deal withal,
A kind of march-pane men that will not last, madam;
An egg and pepper goes farther than their potions,
And a well-built body, a poor parsnip,
Will play his prize above their strong potabiles.
Marg. The fellow's mad.
Leon. He that shall counsel ladies,
That have both liquorish and ambitious eyes,
Is either mad or drunk, let him speak gospel.
Alt. He breaks out modestly.
Leon. Pray be not angry;
My indiscretion has made bold to tell ye
What you'll find true.
Marg. Thou dar'st not talk?
Leon. Not much, madam.
You have a tie upon your servant's tongue,
He dares not be so bold as reason bids him;
'Twere fit there were a stronger on your temper.
Ne'er look so stern upon me, I am your husband;
But what are husbands? read the new world's wonders,
Such husbands as this monstrous world produces,
And you will scarce find such deformities:
They are shadows to conceal your venial virtues,
Sails to your mills, that grind with all occasions,
Balls that lie by you to wash out your stains,
And bills nailed up with horn before your stories,
To rent out lust.
Marg. Do you hear him talk?
Leon. I have done, madam.
An ox once spoke, as learned men deliver;
Shortly I shall be such, then I'll speak wonders:
Till when I tie myself to my obedience. [*Exit.*
Marg. First I'll untie myself. Did you mark the gentleman,
How boldly and how saucily he talked,
And how unlike the lump I took him for,
The piece of ignorant dough? he stood up to me,
And mated my commands: this was your providence,
Your wisdom, to elect this gentleman,
Your excellent forecast in the man, your knowledge;
What think ye now?
Alt. I think him an ass still;
This boldness some of your people have blown
Into him, this wisdom too, with strong wine.
'Tis a tyrant, and a philosopher also, and finds
Out reasons.
Marg. I'll have my cellar locked, no school kept there,
Nor no discovery. I'll turn my drunkards,
Such as are understanding in their draughts,
And dispute learnedly the whys and wherefores,
To grass immediately; I'll keep all fools,
Sober or drunk, still fools, that shall know nothing;
Nothing belongs to mankind but obedience,
And such a hand I'll keep over this husband.
Alt. He will fall again; my life, he cries by this time;
Keep him from drink, he has a high constitution.

Enter LEON.

Leon. Shall I wear my new suit, madam?
Marg. No, your old clothes,
And get you into the country presently,
And see my hawks well trained; you shall have victuals,
Such as are fit for saucy palates, sir,
And lodgings with the hinds; it is too good too.
Alt. Good madam, be not so rough with repentance;
You see now he is come round again.
Marg. I see not what I expect to see.
Leon. You shall see, madam, if it shall please your ladyship.
Altea. He's humbled;
Forgive, good lady.

Marg. Well, go get you handsome,
And let me hear no more.
Leon. Have ye yet no feeling?
I'll pinch ye to the bones then, my proud lady.
[*Exit.*
Marg. See you preserve him thus upon my favour;
You know his temper, tie him to the grindstone.
The next rebellion I'll be rid of him;
I'll have no needy rascals I tie to me,
Dispute my life. Come in, and see all handsome.
Alt. I hope to see you so too: I have wrought ill else. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEREZ.

Per. Shall I never return to mine own house again?
We are lodged here in the miserablest dog-hole!
A conjurer's circle gives content above it,
A hawk's mew is a princely palace to it;
We have a bed no bigger than a basket,
And there we lie like butter clapped together,
And sweat ourselves to sauce immediately;
The fumes are infinite inhabit here too,
And to that so thick, they cut like marmalade;
So various too, they'll pose a gold-finder.
Never return to mine own paradise?
Why wife, I say, why Estifania!
Estif. [*Within.*] I am going presently.
Per. Make haste, good jewel.
I am like the people that live in the sweet islands:
I die, I die, if I stay but one day more here;
My lungs are rotten with the damps that rise,
And I cough nothing now but stinks of all sorts:
The inhabitants we have are two starved rats,
For they are not able to maintain a cat here,
And those appear as fearful as two devils;
They have eat a map of the whole world up already,
And if we stay a night we are gone for company.
There's an old woman that's now grown to marble,
Dried in this brick-hill; and she sits i' th' chimney,
Which is but three tiles, raised like a house of cards,
The true proportion of an old smoked sibyl:
There is a young thing too, that Nature meant
For a maid-servant, but 'tis now a monster;
She has a husk about her like a chesnut,
With business, and living under the line here;
And these two make a hollow sound together,
Like frogs, or winds between two doors that murmur.

Enter ESTIFANIA.

Mercy deliver me! O are you come, wife?
Shall we be free again?
Estif. I am now going,
And you shall presently to your own house, sir:
The remembrance of this small vexation
Will be argument of mirth for ever.
By that time you have said your orisons,
And broke your fast, I shall be back, and ready
To usher you to your old content, your freedom.
Per. Break my neck rather: Is there any thing here to eat
But one another, like a race of cannibals?
A piece of buttered wall you think is excellent:
Let's have our house again immediately,
And pray you take heed unto the furniture,
None be embezzled.
Estif. Not a pin, I warrant ye.
Per. And let 'em instantly depart.
Estif. They shall both;
There's reason in all courtesies, they must both;
For by this time I know she has acquainted him,
And has provided too; she sent me word, sir,
And will give over gratefully unto you.
Per. I'll walk i' th' church-yard;
The dead cannot offend more than these living;
An hour hence I'll expect ye.
Estif. I'll not fail, sir.
Per. And, do you hear, let's have a handsome dinner,
And see all things be decent as they have been,
And let me have a strong bath to restore me.
I stink like a stall-fish shambles, or an oil-shop.
Estif. You shall have all, which some interpret nothing;
I'll send ye people for the trunks aforehand,
And for the stuff.
Per. Let 'em be known and honest,
And do my service to your niece.
Estif. I shall, sir;
But if I come not at my hour, come thither,
That they may give you thanks for your fair courtesy;
And pray ye, be brave, for my sake.
Per. I observe ye. [*Exeunt.*

Enter JUAN DE CASTRO, SANCHIO, *and* CACAFOGO.

Sanch. Thou art very brave.
Cac. I have reason, I have money.
Sanch. Is money reason?
Cac. Yes, and rhyme too, captain;
If ye have no money, ye're an ass.
Sanch. I thank ye.
Cac. Ye have manners, ever thank him that has money.
Sanch. Wilt thou lend me any?
Cac. Not a farthing, captain;
Captains are casual things.
Sanch. Why so are all men; thou shalt have my bond.
Cac. Nor bonds nor fetters, captain;
My money is mine, I make no doubt on't.
Juan. What dost thou do with it?
Cac. Put it to pious uses,
Buy wine and wenches, and undo young coxcombs
That would undo me.
Juan. Are those hospitals?
Cac. I first provide to fill my hospitals
With creatures of mine own, that I know wretched,
And then I build: those are more bound to pray for me:
Besides, I keep th' inheritance in my name still.

Juan. A provident charity. Are you for the wars, sir?
Cac. I am not poor enough to be a soldier,
Nor have I faith enough to ward a bullet;
This is no lining for a trench, I take it.
Juan. Ye have said wisely.
Cac. Had you but my money,
You would swear it, colonel. I had rather drill at home
A hundred thousand crowns, and with more honour,
Than exercise ten thousand fools with nothing;
A wise man safely feeds, fools cut their fingers.
Sanch. A right state usurer. Why dost thou not marry,
And live a reverend justice?
Cac. Is't not nobler to command a reverend justice than to be one?
And for a wife, what need I marry, captain,
When every courteous fool that owes me money,
Owes me his wife too, to appease my fury?
Juan. Wilt thou go to dinner with us?
Cac. I will go and view the pearl of Spain, the orient
Fair one, the rich one too, and I will be respected;
I bear my patent here. I will talk to her,
And when your captainships shall stand aloof,
And pick your noses, I will pick the purse
Of her affection.
Juan. The duke dines there to-day too, the duke of Medina.
Cac. Let the king dine there,
He owes me money, and so far's my creature;
And certainly I may make bold with mine own, captain?
Sanc. Thou wilt eat monstrously.
Cac. Like a true-born Spaniard,
Eat as I were in England, where the beef grows;
And I will drink abundantly, and then
Talk ye as wantonly as Ovid did,
To stir the intellectuals of the ladies;
I learnt it of my father's amorous scrivener.
Juan. If we should play now, you must supply me.
Cac. You must pawn a horse troop,
And then have at ye, colonel.
Sanc. Come let's go:
This rascal will make rare sport; how the ladies
Will laugh at him!
Juan. If I light on him, I'll make his purse sweat too.
Cac. Will ye lead, gentlemen? [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEREZ, *an old Woman, and Maid.*

Per. Nay, pray ye come out, and let me understand ye,
And tune your pipe a little higher, lady;
I'll hold you fast, rub; how came my trunks open,
And my goods gone? what pick-lock spirit?
Old Wom. Ha, what would you have?
Per. My goods again; how came my trunks all open?
Old Wom. Are your trunks open?
Per. Yes, and clothes gone,
And chains, and jewels: how she smells like hung beef,
The palsey, and pick-locks! fye, how she belches
The spirit of garlic!
Old Wom. Where's your gentlewoman?
The young fair woman?
Per. What's that to my question?
She is my wife, and gone about my business.
Maid. Is she your wife, sir?
Per. Yes, sir, is that wonder?
Is the name of wife unknown here?
Old Wom. Is she truly, truly your wife?
Per. I think so, for I married her;
It was no vision, sure!
Maid. She has the keys, sir.
Per. I know she has, but who has all my goods, spirit?
Old Wom. If you be married to that gentlewoman,
You are a wretched man; she has twenty husbands.
Maid. She tells you true.
Old Wom. And she has cozen'd all, sir.
Per. The devil she has? I had a fair house with her,
That stands hard by, and furnish'd royally.
Old Wom. You are cozen'd too, 'tis none of her's; good gentleman!
Maid. The lady Margarita, she was her servant,
And kept the house; but going from her, sir,
For some lewd tricks she play'd——
Per. Plague o' the devil,
Am I, i' th' full meridian of my wisdom,
Cheated by a stale quean! what kind of lady
Is that that owes the house?
Old Wom. A young sweet lady.
Per. Of a low stature?
Old Wom. She is indeed but little, but she is wondrous fair.
Per. I feel I am cozen'd;
Now I am sensible I am undone.
This is the very woman, sure, that cousin
She told me would entreat but for four days,
To make the house hers; I am entreated sweetly.
Maid. When she went out this morning, that I saw, sir,
She had two women at the door attending,
And there she gave 'em things, and loaded 'em,
But what they were——I heard your trunks too open,
If they be yours.
Per. They were mine while they were laden,
But now they have cast their calves, they are not worth
Owning: was she her mistress, say you?
Old Wom. Her own mistress, her very mistress, sir, and all you saw
About, and in that house, was hers.
Per. No plate, no jewels, nor no hangings?
Maid. Not a farthing; she is poor, sir, a poor shifting thing.
Per. No money?

Old Wom. Abominable poor, as poor as we are,
Money as rare to her, unless she steal it;
But for one civil gown her lady gave her,
She may go bare, good gentlewoman.
Per. I am mad now,
I think I am as poor as she, I am wide else;
One civil suit I have left too, and that's all,
And if she steal that, she must flay me for it.
Where does she use?
Old Wom. You may find Truth as soon;
Alas, a thousand conceal'd corners, sir, she lurks in.
And here she gets a fleece, and there another,
And lives in mists and smokes where none can find her.
Per. Is she a whore, too?
Old Wom. Little better, gentleman. I dare not say she is so, sir, because
She is yours, sir; these five years she has firkt
A pretty living,
Until she came to serve.—I fear he will knock my
Brains out for lying.
Per. She has serv'd me faithfully,
A whore and thief? two excellent moral learnings
In one she-saint, I hope to see her legend.
Have I been fear'd for my discoveries,
And courted by all women to conceal 'em?
Have I so long studied the art of this sex,
And read the warnings to young gentlemen?
Have I profest to tame the pride of ladies,
And make 'em bear all tests, and am I trickt now?
Caught in mine own noose? here's a royal left yet;
There's for your lodging and your meat for this week.
A silk-worm lives at a more plentiful ordinary,
And sleeps in a sweeter box: Farewell, great-grandmother;
If I do find you were an accessary,
'Tis but the cutting off two smoky minutes,
I'll hang ye presently.
Old Wom. And I deserve it, I tell but truth.
Per. Not I, I am an ass, mother. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the Duke of MEDINA, JUAN DE CASTRO, ALONZO, SANCHIO, CACAFOGO, *Attendants.*

Duke. A goodly house.
Juan. And richly furnished too, sir.
Alon. Hung wantonly; I like that preparation,
It stirs the blood unto a hopeful banquet,
And intimates the mistress free and jovial;
I love a house where pleasure prepares welcome.
Duke. Now, Cacafogo, how like you this mansion?
'Twere a brave pawn.
Cac. I shall be master of it,
'Twas built for my bulk, the rooms are wide and spacious,
Airy and full of ease, and that I love well;
I'll tell you when I taste the wine, my lord,
And take the height of her table with my stomach,
How my affections stand to the young lady.

Enter MARGARITA, ALTEA, *Ladies, and Servants.*

Marg. All welcome to your grace, and to these soldiers,
You honour my poor house with your fair presence.
Those few slight pleasures that inhabit here, sir,
I do beseech your grace command; they are yours,
Your servant but preserves 'em to delight ye.
Duke. I thank ye, lady; I am bold to visit ye,
Once more to bless mine eyes with your sweet beauty.
'T has been a long night since you left the court,
For till I saw you now, no day broke to me.
Marg. Bring in the duke s meat.
Sanch. She is most excellent.
Juan. Most admirable fair as e'er I look'd upon;
I had rather command her than my regiment.
Cac. I'll have a fling, 'tis but a thousand ducats,
Which I can cozen up again in ten days,
And some few jewels to justify my knavery;
Say I should marry her, she'll get more money
Than all my usury, put my knavery to it.
She appears the most infallible way of purchase;
I could wish her a size or two stronger for the encounter,
For I am like a lion, where I lay hold;
But these lambs will endure a plaguy load,
And never bleat neither; that, sir, time has taught us.
I am so virtuous now, I cannot speak to her,
The arrant'st shame-fac'd ass! I broil away too.

Enter LEON.

Marg. Why, where's this dinner?
Leon. 'Tis not ready, madam,
Nor shall not be until I know the guests too,
Nor are they fairly welcome till I bid 'em.
Juan. Is not this my Alferes? he looks another thing;
Are miracles a-foot again?
Marg. Why, sirrah, why sirrah, you?
Leon. I hear you, saucy woman,
And as you are my wife, command your absence;
And know your duty, 'tis the crown of modesty.
Duke. Your wife!
Leon. Yes, good my lord, I am her husband,
And pray take notice that I claim that honour,
And will maintain it.
Cac. If thou be'st her husband,
I am determin'd thou shalt be my cuckold.
I'll be thy faithful friend.
Leon. Peace, dirt and dunghill!
I will not lose mine anger on a rascal;
Provoke me more, I'll beat thy blown body
Till thou rebound'st again like a tennis-ball.
Alon. This is miraculous.
Sanch. Is this the fellow
That had the patience to become a fool,
A flurted fool, and on a sudden break,

As if he would shew a wonder to the world,
Both in bravery and fortune too?
I much admire the man; I am astonish'd.
Marg. I'll be divorced immediately.
Leon. You shall not,
You shall not have so much will to be wicked.
I am more tender of your honour, lady,
And of your age; you took me for a shadow,
You took me to gloss over your discredit,
To be your fool, you thought you had found a coxcomb;
I am innocent of any foul dishonour I mean to ye:
Only I will be known to be your lord now,
And be a fair one too, or I will fall for 't.
Marg. I do command ye from me, thou poor fellow,
Thou cozen'd fool.
Leon. Thou cozen'd fool! 'tis not so,
I will not be commanded: I am above ye:
You may divorce me from your favour, lady,
But from your state you never shall, I'll hold that;
And then maintain your wantonness, I'll wink at it.
Marg. Am I braved thus in my own house?
Leon. 'Tis mine, madam;
You are deceiv'd, I am lord of it, I rule it and all that's in it;
You have nothing to do here, madam;
But as a servant to sweep clean the lodgings,
And at my farther will to do me service,
And so I'll keep it.
Marg. As you love me, give way.
Leon. It shall be better
I will give none, madam;
I stand upon the ground of mine own honour,
And will maintain it; you shall know me now
To be an understanding feeling man,
And sensible of what a woman aims at,
A young proud woman, that has will to sail with,
An itching woman, that her blood provokes too.
I cast my cloud off, and appear myself,
The master of this little piece of mischief,
And I will put a spell about your feet, lady,
They shall not wander but where I give way now.
Duke. Is this the fellow that the people pointed at
For the mere sign of man, the walking image?
He speaks wondrous highly.
Leon. As a husband ought, sir,
In his own house, and it becomes me well too.
I think your grace would grieve if you were put to it
To have a wife or servant of your own,
(For wives are reckon'd in the rank of servants,)
Under your own roof, to command ye.
Juan. Brave!—a strange conversion! thou shalt lead
In chief now.
Duke. Is there no difference betwixt her and you, sir?
Leon. Not now, my lord, my fortune makes me even;
And, as I am an honest man, I am nobler.
Mar. Get me my coach!
Leon. Let me see who dares get it
Till I command; I'll make him draw your coach too,
And eat your coach, (which will be hard diet,)
That executes your will:—Or take your coach, lady,
I give you liberty; and take your people
Which I turn off, and take your will abroad with you:
Take all these freely—but take me no more!—
And so, farewell!—
Duke. Nay, sir, you shall not carry it
So bravely off; you shall not wrong a lady
In a high huffing strain, and think to bear it!—
We stand not by as bawds to your brave fury,
To see a lady weep!
Leon. They are tears of anger, (I beseech ye note 'em) not worth pity,
Wrung from her rage, because her will prevails not:—
She would swoon now if she could not cry;
Else they were excellent, and I should grieve too:
But falling thus, they show nor sweet nor orient.
Put up, my lord!—this is oppression,
And calls the sword of justice to relieve me;
The law to lend her hand; the king to right me;
All which shall understand how you provoke me.
In mine own house to brave me, is this princely?
Then to my guard, and if I spare your grace,
And do not make this place your monument,
Too rich a tomb for such a rude behaviour,
(I have a cause will kill a thousand of ye,) mercy forsake me!—
Juan. Hold, fair sir, I beseech you,
The gentleman but pleads his own right nobly.
Leon. He that dares strike against the husband's freedom,
The husband's curse stick to him!—A tam'd cuckold;
His wife be fair and young, but most dishonest,
Most impudent, and have no feeling of it;
No conscience to reclaim her from a monster;
Let her lie by him like a flattering ruin,
And at one instant kill both name and honour:
Let him be lost, no eye to weep his end,
Nor find no earth that's base enough to bury him:—
Now, sir, fall on, I am ready to oppose ye.
Duke. I have better thought.—I pray, sir, use your wife well.
Leon. Mine own humanity will teach me that, sir:—
And now you are all welcome, all! and we'll to dinner;
This is my wedding-day.
Duke. I'll cross your joy yet.
Juan. I have seen a miracle: hold thine own, soldier!—

Sure they dare fight in fire, that conquer women!
Sanch. He's beaten all my loose thoughts out of me,
As if he had thresh'd them out o' the husk.

Enter PEREZ.

Per. 'Save ye, which is the lady of the house?
Leon. That's she, sir, that pretty lady,
If you would speak with her.
Juan. Don Michael!
Leon. Another darer come?
Per. Pray do not know me, I am full of business;
When I have more time I'll be merry with ye.
It *is* the woman:—Good madam, tell me truly,
Had you a maid call'd Estifania?
Marg. Yes truly had I.
Per. Was she a maid, do you think?
Marg. I dare not swear for her,
For she had but a scant fame.
Per. Was she your kinswoman?
Marg. Not that I ever knew; now I look better,
I think you married her; 'give you joy, sir,
You may reclaim her,—'twas a wild young girl.
Per. Give me a halter:—Is not this house mine, madam?
Was not she owner of it? Pray, speak truly.
Marg. No, certainly; I'm sure my money paid for it,
And I ne'er remember yet I gave it you, sir.
Per. The hangings and the plate too?
Marg. All are mine, sir,
And every thing you see about the building:
She only kept my house when I was absent,
And so ill kept it, I was weary of her.
Sanch. What a devil ails he?
Juan. He's possest, I'll assure you.
Per. Where is your maid?
Marg. Do not you know that have her?
She is your's now, why should I look after her?
Since that first hour I came I never saw her.
Per. I saw her later; would the devil had had her!
It is all true I find;—a wild-fire take her!
Juan. Is thy wife with child, Don Michael? Thy excellent wife!—
Art thou a man yet?
Alons. When shall we come and visit thee?
Sanch. And eat some rare fruit?—Thou hast admirable orchards!—
You are so jealous now.—Pox o' your jealousy,
How scurvily you look!—
Per. Prithee leave fooling,
I am in no humour now to fool and prattle.—
Did she ne'er play the wag with you?
Marg. Yes, many times, so often that I was asham'd to keep her:
But I forgave her, sir, in hope she would mend still:
And had not you o' th' instant married her,
I had put her off.
Per. I thank ye, I am blest still;
Which way soe'er I turn, I am a made man;
Miserably gull'd beyond recovery.
Juan. You'll stay and dine?
Per. Certain I cannot, captain:—
Hark in thine ear, I am the arrantest puppy,
The miserablest ass!—but I must leave ye,—
I am in haste, in haste; bless you, good madam,
And may you prove as good as my wife! [*Exit.*
Leon. Will you come near, sir? will your grace but honour me,
And taste our dinner? you are nobly welcome;
All anger's past, I hope, and I shall serve ye.
Juan. Thou art the stock of men, and I admire thee. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter PEREZ.

Per. I'll go to a conjurer but I'll find this polecat,
This pilfering whore:—A plague of veils, I cry,
And covers for the impudence of women;—
Their sanctity in show will deceive devils:—
It is my evil angel, let me bless me!—

Enter ESTIFANIA *with a Casket.*

Estif. 'Tis he, I am caught, I must stand to it stoutly,
And show no shake of fear:—I see he is angry;
Vex'd at the uttermost.
Per. My worthy wife!
I have been looking of your modesty
All the town over.
Estif. My most noble husband!
I am glad I have found ye; for, in truth, I am weary,
Weary and lame, with looking out your lordship.
Per. I have been in bawdy-houses—
Estif. I believe you, and very lately too.
Per. Pray you pardon me,
To seek your ladyship: I have been in cellars,
In private cellars, where the thirsty bawds
Hear your confessions: I have been at plays,
To look you out amongst the youthful actors;
At puppet-shews, (you are mistress of the motions:)
At gossippings I hearkened after you;
But amongst those confusions of lewd tongues
There's no distinguishing beyond a Babel.
I was amongst the nuns, because you sing well;
But they say your's are bawdy songs, they mourn for ye:

And last I went to church to seek you out;
'Tis so long since you were there, they have forgot you.
Estif. You have had a pretty progress, I'll tell mine now:—
To look you out, I went to twenty taverns.
Per. And are you sober?
Estif. Yes, I reel not yet, sir,—
Where I saw twenty drunk, most of 'em soldiers;
There I had great hope to find you disguis'd too.
From hence to th' dicing-house; there I found
Quarrels needless and senseless, swords and pots, and candlesticks,
Tables and stools, and all in one confusion,
And no man knew his friend.—I left this chaos,
And to the chirurgeon's went; he will'd me stay,
For, says he, learnedly, if he be tippled,
Twenty to one he whores, and then I hear of him:
If he be mad, he quarrels, then he comes too.—
I sought ye where no safe thing would have ventur'd,
Amongst diseases base, and vile, vile women;
For I rememb'red your old Roman axiom,
The more the danger, still the more the honour.
Last, to your confessor I came, who told me
You were too proud to pray;—and here I have found ye!—
Per. She bears up bravely, and the rogue is witty,
But I shall dash it instantly to nothing.—
Here leave we off our wanton languages,
And now conclude we in a sharper tongue.
Why am I cozen'd?
Estif. Why am I abused?
Per. Thou most vile, base, abominable—
Estif. Captain!
Per. Thou stinking, overstew'd, poor, pocky—
Estif. Captain!
Per. Do you echo me?
Estif. Yes, sir, and go before ye,
And round about ye:—Why do you rail at me
For that that was your own sin, your own knavery?—
Per. And brave me too?
Estif. You had best now draw your sword, captain;
Draw it upon a woman, do, brave captain!
Upon your wife, oh most renowned captain!—
Per. A plague upon thee, answer me directly,
Why didst thou marry me?
Estif. To be my husband.
I had thought you had had infinite, but I am cozen'd.
Per. Why didst thou flatter me, and shew me wonders?
A house and riches, when they are but shadows,
Shadows to me?
Estif. Why did you work on me,
(It was but my part to requite you, sir,)
With your strong soldier's wit, and swore you would bring me
So much in chains, so much in jewels, husband;
So much in right rich clothes?
Per. Thou hast 'em, rascal;
I gave 'em to thy hands, my trunks and all,
And thou hast open'd 'em, and sold my treasure.
Estif. Sir, there's your treasure, sell it to a tinker
To mend old kettles,—is this noble usage?—
Let all the world view here the captain's treasure!
A man would think now these were worthy matters:—
Here's a shoeing-horn chain gilt over; how it scenteth,
Worse than the mouldy dirty heel it served for!
And here's another of a lesser value,
So little I would shame to tie my dog in't:—
These are my jointure!—Blush and save a labour,
Or these else will blush for ye!—
Per. A fire subtle ye! are ye so crafty?
Estif. Here's a goodly jewel;
Did not you win this at Goletta, captain?
Or took it in the field from some brave Bassa?
How it sparkles like an old lady's eyes,
And fills each room with light like a close lanthorn!—
This would do rarely in an abbey window,
To cozen pilgrims:—
Per. Prithee, leave prating.
Estif. And here's a chain of whitings' eyes for pearls,
A mussel-monger would have made a better.—
Per. Nay, prithee wife, my clothes, my clothes.
Estif. I'll tell ye,
Your clothes are parallels to these, all counterfeit:
Put these and them on, you are a man of copper,
A kind of candlestick!—These you thought, my husband,
To have cozen'd me withal, but I am quit with you.—
Per. Is there no house then, nor no grounds about it?
No plate nor hangings?
Estif. There are none, sweet husband!
Shadow for shadow is as equal justice.—
Can you rail now?—Pray put up your fury, sir,
And speak great words!—You are a soldier!—Thunder!—
Per. I will speak little: I have play'd the fool,
And so I am rewarded.
Estif. You have spoke well, sir:
And now I see you are so conformable,
I'll heighten you again:—Go to your house,
They are packing to be gone:—You must sup there:—
I'll meet ye, and bring clothes and clean shirts after;
And all things shall be well.—I'll colt you once more,
And teach you to bring copper!— [*Aside.*
Per. Tell me one thing,
I do beseech ye tell me, tell me truth, wife;
However, I forgive thee; art thou honest?
The beldam swore—
Estif. I bid her tell you so, sir.

It was my plot:—Alas, my credulous husband,
The lady told you too—
Per. Most strange things of thee.
Estif. Still 'twas my way, and all to try your sufferance:
And she denied the house?
Per. She knew me not,
No, nor no title that I had.
Estif. 'Twas well carried:—
No more, I am right and strait.
Per. I would believe thee,
But heaven knows how my heart is!—Will ye follow me?
Estif. I'll be there strait.
Per. I am fooled, yet dare not find it.
[*Exit* PER.
Estif. Go, silly fool! thou may'st be a good soldier
In open field, but for our private service
Thou art an ass!—I'll make thee so, or miss else.

Enter CACAFOGO.

Here comes another trout that I must tickle,
And tickle daintily, I have lost my end else.—
May I crave your leave, sir?
Cac. Prithee be answered, thou shalt crave no leave;
I am in my meditations, do not vex me.
A beaten thing, but this hour a most bruised thing,
That people had compassion on, it looked so:
The next sir Palmerin; here's fine proportion,
An ass and then an elephant:—Sweet justice!
There's no way left to come at her now, no craving.
If money could come near, yet I would pay him:
I have a mind to make him a huge cuckold,
And money may do much:—A thousand ducats!
'Tis but the letting blood of a rank heir.
Estif. Pray you, hear me!—
Cac. I know thou hast some wedding-ring to pawn now,
Of silver and gilt, with a blind posie in't;
Love and a mill-horse should go round together,
Or thy child's whistle, or thy squirrel's chain:
I'll none of 'em:—I would she did but know me;
Or would this fellow had but use of money,
That I might come in any way.
Estif. I am gone, sir,
And I shall tell the beauty sent me to ye,
The lady Margarita—
Cac. Stay, I prithee,
What is thy will?—I turn me wholly to ye,
And talk now till thy tongue ach, I will hear ye.
Estif. She would intreat you, sir—
Cac. She shall command, sir!
Let it be so, I beseech thee, my sweet gentlewoman!
Do not forget thyself.
Estif. She does command then
This courtesy, because she knows you are noble.
Cac. Your mistress by the way?
Estif. My natural mistress.
Upon these jewels, sir, they are fair and rich,
And view 'em right,—
Cac. To doubt 'em, is an heresy.
Estif. A thousand ducats:—'Tis upon necessity
Of present use; her husband, sir, is stubborn—
Cac. Long may he be so.
Estif. She desires, withal, a better knowledge of your parts and person;
And when you please to do her so much honour—
Cac. Come, let's dispatch.
Estif. In troth I have heard her say, sir,
Of a fat man she has not seen a sweeter!
But in this business, sir—
Cac. Let's do it first,
And then dispute; the lady's use may long for't.
Estif. All secrecy she would desire; she told me
How wise you are.
Cac. We are not wise to talk thus:—
Carry her the gold! I'll look her out a jewel
Shall sparkle like her eyes, and thee another:—
Come, prithee come, I long to serve thy lady,
Long monstrously!—Now, valour, I shall meet ye,
You that dare dukes!
Estif. Green goose, you are now in sippets.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter the Duke, SANCHIO, JUAN, *and* ALONZO.

Duke. He shall not have his will, I shall prevent him;
I have a toy here that will turn the tide,
And suddenly and strangely:—Here, Don Juan,
Do you present it to him.
Juan. I am commanded. [*Exit.*
Duke. A fellow founded out of charity,
And moulded to the height, contemn his maker,
Curb the free hand that fram'd him?—This must not be.
Sanch. That such an oyster-shell should hold a pearl,
And of so rare a price, in prison!
Was she made to be the matter of her own undoing,
To let a slovenly unwieldy fellow,
Unruly and self-will'd, dispose her beauties?
We suffer all, sir, in this sad eclipse;
She should shine where she might show like herself,
An absolute sweetness, to comfort those admire her,
And shed her beams upon her friends!—
We are gull'd all,
And all the world will grumble at your patience,
If she be ravish'd thus.
Duke. Ne'er fear it, Sanchio,
We'll have her free again, and move at court
In her clear orb: But one sweet handsomeness
To bless this part of Spain, and have that slubber'd!
Alon. 'Tis every good man's cause, and we must stir in it.
Duke. I'll warrant ye, he shall be glad to please us,
And glad to share too:—We shall hear anon
A new song from him:—Let's attend a little.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter LEON *and* JUAN, *with a Commission.*

Leon. Colonel, I am bound to you for this nobleness.
I should have been your officer, 'tis true, sir,
And a proud man I should have been to have served you;
'T has pleased the king, out of his boundless favours,
To make me your companion; this commission
Gives me a troop of horse.
Juan. I do rejoice at it,
And am a glad man we shall gain your company.
I am sure the king knows you are newly married,
And out of that respect gives you more time, sir.
Leon. Within four days I am gone, so he commands me,
And 'tis not mannerly for me to argue it.
The time grows shorter still; are your goods ready?
Juan. They are aboard.
Leon. Who waits there?

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir.
Leon. Do you hear, ho? go carry this unto your mistress, sir,
And let her see how much the king has honoured me.
Bid her be lusty; she must make a soldier. [*Exit.*

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Sir.
Leon. Go, take down all the hangings,
And pack up all my clothes, my plate and jewels,
And all the furniture that's portable.
Sir, when we lie in garrison, 'tis necessary
We keep a handsome port, for the king's honour;
And, do you hear, let all your lady's wardrobe
Be safely placed in trunks. They must along too.
Lor. Whither must they go, sir?
Leon. To the wars, Lorenzo,
And you and all; I will not leave a turn-spit,
That has one dram of spleen against a Dutchman.
Lor. Why then, St Jaques! hey, you have made us all, sir,
And if we leave you——does my lady go too?
Leon. The stuff must go to-morrow towards the sea, sir.
All, all must go.
Lor. Why, Pedro, Vasco, Diego,
Come help me, come, come boys, soldadoes, comrades,
We'll flay these beer-bellied rogues, come away quickly. [*Exit.*
Juan. He's taken a brave way to save his honour,
And cross the duke; now I shall love him dearly.
By the life of credit thou art a noble gentleman.

Enter MARGARITA, *led by two Ladies.*

Leon. Why, how now, wife? what, sick at my preferment?
This is not kindly done.
Marg. No sooner love ye,
Love you entirely, sir; brought to consider
The goodness of your mind and mine own duty,
But lose you instantly, be divorced from me?
This is a cruelty. I'll to the king,
And tell him 'tis unjust to part two souls,
Two minds so nearly mixt.
Leon. By no means, sweetheart.
Marg. If he were married but four days as I am—
Leon. He would hang himself the fifth, or fly his country. [*Aside.*
Marg. He would make it treason for that tongue that durst
But talk of war, or any thing to vex him.
You shall not go.
Leon. Indeed, I must, sweet wife.
What! shall I lose the king for a few kisses?
We'll have enough.
Marg. I'll to the duke, my cousin; he shall to the king.
Leon. He did me this great office,
I thank his grace for't; should I pray him now,
To undo't again? Fye, 'twere a base discredit.
Marg. Would I were able, sir, to bear you company;
How willing should I be then, and how merry!
I will not live alone.
Leon. Be in peace; you shall not. [*Knocks within.*
Marg. What knocking's this? Oh, Heaven, my head! why, rascals,
I think the war's begun i' th' house already.
Leon. The preparation is; they are taking down,
And packing up the hangings, plate and jewels,
And all these furnitures that shall befit me,
When I lie in garrison.

Enter Coachman.

Coachm. Must the coach go too, sir?
Leon. How will your lady pass to th' sea else easily?
We shall find shipping for't there to transport it.
Marg. I go? alas!
Leon. I'll have a main care of you,
I know you are sickly; he shall drive the easier,
And all accommodation shall attend you.
Marg. Would I were able.
Leon. Come, I warrant you,
Am not I with you, sweet? Are her clothes packed up,
And all her linen? Give your maids direction;
You know my time's but short, and I am commanded.
Marg. Let me have a nurse,
And all such necessary people with me,
And an easy bark.
Leon. It shall not trot, I warrant you;
Curvet it may sometimes.
Marg. I am with child, sir.
Leon. At four days warning? This is something speedy;
Do you conceive, as our jennets do, with a west wind?
My heir will be an arrant fleet one, lady.
I'll swear you were a maid when I first lay with you.
Marg. Pray, do not swear; I thought I was a maid too,

But we may both be cozen'd in that point, sir.
Leon. In such a strait point, sure, I could not err, madam.
Juan. This is another tenderness to try him. Fetch her up now.
Marg. You must provide a cradle, and what a trouble's that?
Leon. The sea shall rock it,
'Tis the best nurse; 'twill roar and rock together,
A swinging storm will sing you such a lullaby!
Marg. Faith, let me stay, I shall but shame you, sir.
Leon. An' you were a thousand shames you shall along with me,
At home I am sure you'll prove a million;
Every man carries the bundle of his sins
Upon his own back; you are mine, I'll sweat for you.

Enter Duke, ALONZO, SANCHIO.

Duke. What, sir, preparing for your noble journey?
'Tis well, and full of care.
I saw your mind was wedded to the war,
And knew you would prove some good man for your country;
Therefore, fair cousin, with your gentle pardon,
I got this place. What, mourn at his advancement?
You are to blame; he will come again, sweet cousin.
Meantime, like sad Penelope, and sage,
Amongst your maids at home, and housewifely—
Leon. No, sir, I dare not leave her to that solitariness.
She is young; and grief or ill news from those quarters
May daily cross her; she shall go along, sir.
Duke. By no means, captain.
Leon. By all means, an't please you.
Duke. What, take a young and tender-bodied lady,
And expose her to those dangers, and those tumults?
A sickly lady, too?
Leon. 'Twill make her well, sir.
There's no such friend to health as wholesome travel.
Sanch. Away, it must not be.
Alon. It ought not, sir;
Go hurry her? It is not humane, captain.
Duke. I cannot blame her tears. Fright her with tempests,
With thunder of the war!
I dare swear, if she were able—
Leon. She is most able,
And pray ye, swear not, she must go; there's no remedy.
Nor greatness, nor the trick you had to part us,
Which I smell too rank, too open, too evident,
(And I must tell you, sir, 'tis most unnoble,)
Shall hinder me. Had she but ten hours life,
Nay less, but two hours, I would have her with me;
I would not leave her fame to so much ruin,
To such a desolation and discredit
As her weakness and your hot will would work her to.

Enter PEREZ.

What masque is this now?
More tropes and figures, to abuse my sufferance!
What cousin's this?
Juan. Michael van Owle, how dost thou?
In what dark barn or tod of aged ivy
Hast thou lain hid?
Per. Things must both ebb and flow, colonel,
And people must conceal, and shine again.
You are welcome hither, as your friend may say, gentlemen;
A pretty house, ye see, handsomely seated,
Sweet and convenient walks, the waters crystal.
Alon. He's certain mad.
Juan. As mad as a French tailor,
That has nothing in's head but ends of fustians.
Per. I see you are packing, now, my gentle cousin,
And my wife told me I should find it so;
'Tis true I do; you were merry when I was last here,
But 'twas your will to try my patience, madam.
I am sorry that my swift occasions
Can let you take your pleasure here no longer;
Yet, I would have you think, my honoured cousin,
This house and all I have are all your servants.
Leon. What house, what pleasure, sir; what do you mean?
Per. You hold the jest so stiff, 'twill prove discourteous.
This house I mean, the pleasures of this place.
Leon. And what of them?
Per. They are mine, sir, and you know it,
My wife's I mean, and so conferr'd upon me.
The hangings, sir, I must entreat your servants,
That are so busy in their offices,
Again to minister to their right uses.
I shall take view o' th' plate, anon, and furnitures,
That are of under place. You are merry still, cousin,
And of a pleasant constitution.
Men of great fortunes make their mirths *ad placitum.*
Leon. Prithee, good stubborn wife, tell me directly,
Good evil wife, leave fooling, and tell me honestly,
Is this my kinsman?
Marg. I can tell ye nothing.
Leon. I have many kinsmen, but so mad a one,
And so fantastic——all the house?
Per. All mine,
And all within it. I will not bate ye an ace on't.
Can you not receive a noble courtesy,
And quietly and handsomely, as you ought, coz,
But you must ride o' th' top on't?
Leon. Canst thou fight?
Per. I'll tell you presently. I could have done, sir.
Leon. For we must law and claw before ye get it.
Juan. Away, no quarrels.
Leon. Now, I am more temperate,

I'll have it proved if you were never yet in Bedlam,
Never in love, for that's a lunacy;
No great estate left you that you never looked for,
Nor cannot manage, that's a rank distemper;
That you were christen'd, and who answered for you;
And then I yield.
Per. He's half persuaded me, I was bred i' th' moon:
I have ne'er a bush at my breech? Are not we both mad,
And is not this a fantastic house we are in,
And all a dream we do? Will you walk out, sir,
And if I do not beat thee presently
Into a sound belief as sense can give thee,
Brick me into that wall there for a chimney piece,
And say I was one o' th' Cæsars, done by a seal-cutter.
Leon. I'll talk no more; come, we'll away immediately.
Marg. Why, then, the house is his, and all that's in it;
I'll give away my skin, but I'll undo you.
I gave it to his wife; you must restore, sir,
And make a new provision.
Per. Am I mad now, or am I christen'd, you, my pagan cousin,
My mighty Mahound kinsman, what quirk now?
You shall be welcome all. I hope to see, sir,
Your grace here, and my coz; we are all soldiers,
And must do naturally for one another.
Duke. Are ye blank at this? Then I must tell you, sir,
Ye have no command; now, you may go at pleasure,
And ride your ass troop; 'twas a trick I used
To try your jealousy, upon entreaty,
And saving of your wife.
Leon. All this not moves me,
Nor stirs my gall, nor alters my affections.
You have more furniture, more houses, lady,
And rich ones too; I will make bold with those.
And you have land i' th' Indies, as I take it;
Thither we'll go, and view a while those climates,
Visit your factors there, that may betray you.
'Tis done; we must go.
Marg. Now, thou art a brave gentleman,
And by this sacred light I love thee dearly.—
The house is none of yours; I did but jest, sir,
Nor you are no coz of mine; I beseech you vanish.
I tell you plain; you have no more right than he has,
That senseless thing. Your wife has once more fooled you:
Go you, and consider.
Leon. Good morrow, my sweet cousin! I should be glad, sir—
Per. By this hand, she dies for't,
Or any man that speaks for her. [*Exit* PER.
Juan. These are fine toys.
Marg. Let me request you stay but one poor month;
You shall have a commission, and I'll go too.
Give me but will so far.
Leon. Well, I will try you;
Good-morrow to your grace, we have private business.
Duke. If I miss thee again, I am an arrant bungler.
Juan. Thou shalt have my command, and I'll march under thee;
Nay, be thy boy, before thou shalt be baffled;
Thou art so brave a fellow.
Alon. I have seen visions. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter LEON, *with a Letter, and* MARGARITA.

Leon. Come hither, wife; do you know this hand?
Marg. I do, sir.
'Tis Estifania, that was once my woman.
Leon. She writes to me here, that one Cacafogo,
An usuring jeweller's son, (I know the rascal)
Is mortally fallen in love with you.
Marg. He is a monster; deliver me from mountains!
Leon. Do you go a-birding for all sorts of people?
And this evening will come to you, and shew you jewels,
And offers any thing to get access to you.
If I can make or sport or profit on him,
For he is fit for both, she bids me use him;
And so I will, be you conformable, and follow but my will.
Marg. I shall not fail, sir.
Leon. Will the duke come again, do you think?
Marg. No, sure, sir,
He has now no policy to bring him hither.
Leon. Nor bring you to him, if my wit hold, fair wife:
Let's in to dinner. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEREZ.

Per. Had I but lungs enough to bawl sufficiently,
That all the queans in Christendom might hear me,
That men might run away from the contagion,
I had my wish; would it were most high treason,
Most infinite high, for any man to marry,
I mean for any man that would live handsomely,
And like a gentleman, in his wits and credit.
What torments shall I put her to? Phalaris' bull now?
Pox, they love bulling too well, though they smoke for it.
Cut her a-pieces? every piece will live still,

And every morsel of her will do mischief;
They have so many lives, there's no hanging of 'em;
They are too light to drown, they are cork and feathers;
To burn too cold, they live like salamanders;
Under huge heaps of stones to bury her,
And so depress her as they did the giants?
She will move under more than built old Babel;
I must destroy her.

Enter CACAFOGO, *with a Casket.*

Cac. Be cozen'd by a thing of clouts, a she-moth,
That every silkman's shop breeds; to be cheated,
And of a thousand ducats, by a whim wham!
Per. Who's that is cheated? speak again, thou vision!
But art thou cheated? minister some comfort:
Tell me directly, art thou cheated bravely?
Come, prithee come, art thou so pure a coxcomb,
To be undone! do not dissemble with me,
Tell me I conjure thee.
Cac. Then keep thy circle,
For I am a spirit wild that flies about thee,
And whoe'er thou art, if thou be'st human,
I'll let thee plainly know, I am cheated damnably.
Per. Ha, ha, ha!
Cac. Dost thou laugh? damnably, I say most damnably.
Per. By whom, good spirit, speak, speak, ha, ha, ha!
Cac. I will utter, laugh till thy lungs crack, by a rascal woman,
A lewd, abominable, and plain woman.—
Dost thou laugh still?
Per. I must laugh, prithee pardon me,
I shall laugh terribly!
Cac. I shall be angry, terribly angry, I have cause.
Per. That's it, and 'tis no reason but thou shouldst be angry,
Angry at heart, yet I must laugh still at thee.—
By a woman cheated!—art sure it was a woman?
Cac. I shall break thy head, my valour itches at thee.
Per. It is no matter; by a woman cozen'd,
A real woman!
Cac. A real devil!
Plague of her jewels, and her copper chains,
How rank they smell!
Per. Sweet cozen'd sir, let me see them;
I have been cheated too, I would have you note that,
And lewdly cheated, by a woman also,
A scurvy woman. I am undone, sweet sir,
Therefore I must have leave to laugh.
Cac. Pray ye take it,
You are the merriest undone man in Europe!
What need we fiddles, bawdy songs, and sack,
When our own miscries can make us merry?
Per. Ha, ha, ha!
I have seen these jewels; what a notable penny-worth
Have you had next your heart! you will not take, sir,
Some twenty ducats—
Cac. Thou art deceiv'd, I will take—
Per. To clear your bargain now.
Cac. I'll take some ten, some any thing, some half ten,
Half a ducat!
Per. An excellent lapidary set these stones sure,
Do you mark their waters?
Cac. Quicksand choak their waters,
And hers that brought 'em too! but I shall find her.
Per. And so shall I, I hope, but do not hurt her.
You cannot find in all this kingdom,
(If you have need of cozening, as you may have,
For such gross natures will desire it often,
'Tis at some time too a fine variety,)
A woman that can cozen ye so neatly.
She has taken half mine anger off with this trick,
[*Exit.*
Cac. If I were valiant now, I would kill this fellow.
I have money enough lies by me at a pinch
To pay for twenty rascal's lives that vex me.
I'll to this lady, there I shall be satisfied. [*Exit.*

Enter LEON *and* MARGARITA.

Leon. Come, we'll away unto your country-house,
And there we'll learn to live contentedly;
This place is full of charge, and full of hurry,
No part of sweetness dwells about these cities.
Marg. Whither you will, I wait upon your pleasure;
Live in a hollow tree, sir, I'll live with ye.
Leon. Ay, now you strike a harmony, a true one,
When your obedience waits upon your husband,
And your sick will aims at the care of honour.
Why now I doat upon ye, love ye dearly,
And my rough nature falls like roaring streams,
Clearly and sweetly into your embraces.
O what a jewel is a woman excellent,
A wise, a virtuous, and a noble woman!
When we meet such, we bear our stamps on both sides,
And through the world we hold our current virtues.
Alone we are single medals, only faces,
And wear our fortunes out in useless shadows;
Command you now, and ease me of that trouble,
I'll be as humble to you as a servant.
Bid whom you please, invite your noble friends,
They shall be welcome all, visit acquaintance,
Go at your pleasure, now experience
Has link'd you fast unto the chain of goodness:
What noise is this, what dismal cry?
[*Clashing swords. A cry within, down with their swords.*
Marg. 'Tis loud too.
Sure there's some mischief done i' th' street; look out there.
Leon. Look out and help!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Oh, sir, the duke Medina!—
Leon. What of the duke Medina?
Serv. Oh, sweet gentleman, is almost slain.
Marg. Away, away, and help him, all the house help. [*Exit Servant.*
Leon. How, slain? why Margarita,
Why, wife! sure some new device they have on foot again,
Some trick upon my credit; I shall meet it.
I had rather guard a ship imperial
Alone, and in a storm, than rule one woman!—

Enter Duke, MARGARITA, SANCHIO, ALONZO, *Servant.*

Marg. How came ye hurt, sir?
Duke. I fell out with my friend, the noble colonel,
My cause was nought, for 'twas about your honour:
And he that wrongs the innocent ne'er prospers,
And he has left me thus; for charity,
Lend me a bed to ease my tortur'd body,
That ere I perish I may show my penitence;
I fear I am slain.
Leon. Help, gentlemen, to carry him;
There shall be nothing in my house, my lord,
But as your own.
Duke. I thank ye, noble sir,
Leon. To bed with him, and, wife, give your attendance.

Enter JUAN.

Juan. Doctors and surgeons—
Duke. Do not disquiet me,
But let me take my leave in peace.
[*Exeunt Duke,* SAN. ALON. MARG. *Serv.*
Leon. Afore me,
'Tis rarely counterfeited.
Juan. True, it is so, sir,
And take you heed, this last blow do not spoil ye.
He is not hurt, only we made a scuffle,
As though we purpos'd anger; that same scratch
On's hand he took, to colour all, and draw compassion,
That he might get into your house more cunningly.
I must not stay; stand now, and ye're a brave fellow.
Leon. I thank ye, noble colonel, and I honour ye. [*Exit* JUAN.
Never be quiet?—

Enter MARGARITA.

Marg. He's most desperate ill, sir,
I do not think these ten months will recover him.
Leon. Does he hire my house to play the fool in,
Or does it stand on fairy ground? we are haunted;
Are all men and their wives troubled with dreams thus?—
Marg. What ail you, sir?—
Leon. What ail you, sweet wife,
To put these daily pastimes on my patience?
What dost thou see in me, that I should suffer thus?
Have I not done my part like a true husband,
And paid some desperate debts you never look'd for?
Marg. You have done handsomely, I must confess, sir.
Leon. Have I not kept thee waking like a hawk?
And watch'd thee with delights to satisfy thee,
The very tithes of which had won a widow?
Marg. Alas, I pity thee!
Leon. Thou wilt make me angry,
Thou never saw'st me mad yet.
Marg. You are always,
You carry a kind of bedlam still about ye.
Leon. If thou pursu'st me further, I run stark mad.
If you have more hurt dukes or gentlemen,
To lye here on your cure, I shall be desperate;
I know the trick, and you shall feel I know it;
Are ye so hot that no hedge can contain ye?
I'll have thee let blood in all the veins about thee,
I'll have thy thoughts found too, and have them open'd,
Thy spirits purg'd, for those are they that fire ye;
Thy maid shall be thy mistress, thou the maid,
And all those servile labours thou shalt reach at,
And go through cheerfully, or else sleep empty:
That maid shall lye by me to teach you duty,
You in a pallet by to humble ye,
And grieve for what you lose.
Marg. I have lost myself, sir,
And all that was my base self, disobedience. [*Kneels.*
My wantonness, my stubbornness I have lost too,
And now by that pure faith good wives are crown'd with,
By your own nobleness—

Enter ALTEA.

Leon. I take ye up, and wear ye next my heart;
See you be worth it:—Now what with you?
Alt. I come to tell my lady,
There is a fulsome fellow would fain speak with her.
Leon. 'Tis Cacafogo, go and entertain him,
And draw him on with hopes.
Marg. I shall observe ye.
Leon. I have a rare design upon that gentleman,
And you must work too—
Alt. I shall, sir, most willingly.
Leon. Away then both, and keep him close in some place
From the duke's sight; and keep the duke in too:
Make 'em believe both, I'll find time to cure 'em. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PEREZ, *and* ESTIPANIA, *with a Pistol and a Dagger.*

Per. Why how dar'st thou meet me again, thou rebel,
And know'st how thou hast used me thrice, thou rascal?
Were there not ways enough to fly my vengeance,
No holes nor vaults to hide thee from my fury,
But thou must meet me face to face to kill thee?
I would not seek thee to destroy thee willingly,
But now thou com'st to invite me,
And com'st upon me.

Now like a sheep-biting rogue taken i' th' manner,
And ready for the halter, dost thou look now?
Thou hast a hanging look, thou scurvy thing;
hast ne'er a knife,
Nor ever a string to lead thee to Elysium?
Be there no pitiful 'pothecaries in this town,
That have compassion upon wretched women,
And dare administer a dram of rats-bane,
But thou must fall to me?
Estif. I know you have mercy.
Per. If I had tons of mercy thou deserv'st none.
What new trick is now a-foot, and what new
hotises
Have you i' th' air, what orchards in apparition?
What canst thou say for thy life?
Estif. Little or nothing.
I know you'll kill me, and I know 'tis useless
To beg for mercy; pray let me draw my book out,
And pray a little.
Per. Do, a very little,
For I have further business than thy killing.
I have money yet to borrow; speak when you
are ready.
Estif. Now, now sir, now— [*Shews a pistol.*
Come on! do you start off from me?
Do you swear, great captain, have you seen a
spirit?
Per. Do you wear guns?—
Estif. I am a soldier's wife, sir,—
And by that privilege I may be arm'd.
Now what's the news, and let's discourse more
friendly,
And talk of our affairs in peace.
Per. Let me see,
Prithee let me see thy gun, 'tis a very pretty one.
Estif. No, no, sir, you shall feel.
Per. Hold ye, villain! what, thine own husband?
Estif. Let mine own husband then
Be in's own wits: there, there's a thousand ducats.
Who must provide for you? and yet you'll kill me!
Per. I will not hurt thee for ten thousand mil-
lions.
Estif. When will you redeem your jewels? I
have pawn'd 'em
You see for what; we must keep touch.
Per. I'll kiss thee,
And get as many more; I'll make thee famous.
Had we the house now!—
Estif. Come along with me;
If that be vanished, there be more to hire, sir.
Per. I see I am an ass when thou art near me.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter LEON, MARGARITA, *and* ALTEA, *with a Taper.*

Leon. Is the fool come?
Alt. Yes, and i' th' cellar fast;
And there he stays his good hour till I call him;
He will make dainty music among the sack-butts.
I have put him fast, sir, under the duke's chamber.
Leon. It is the better.
Alt. Has given me royally,
And to my lady a whole load of portigues.
Leon. Better and better still. Go, Margarita,
Now play your prize; you say you dare be honest,
I'll put you to your best.
Marg. Secure yourself, sir; give me the candle,
Pass away in silence. [*Exeunt* LEON *and* ALTEA.
[*She knocks.*
Duke. Who's there? Oh, oh.
Marg. My lord.
Duke. [*Within.*] Have ye brought me comfort
Marg. I have, my lord.
Come forth, 'tis I; come gently out, I'll help ye.

Enter Duke, in a Gown.

Come softly too; how do you?
Duke. Are there none here?
Let me look round; we cannot be too wary.
[*Noise below.*
Oh, let me bless this hour! are you alone, sweet
friend?
Marg. Alone to comfort you.
[CAGA. *makes a noise below.*
Duke. What's that you tumble?
I have heard a noise this half hour under me,
A fearful noise.
Marg. The fat thing's mad i' th' cellar,
And stumbles from one hogshead to another;
Two cups more, and he ne'er shall find the way
out.
What do you fear? come, sit down By me cheer-
fully;
My husband's safe; how do your wounds?
Duke. I have none, lady;
My wounds I counterfeited cunningly,
[*Noise below.*
And feigned the quarrel too, to enjoy you, sweet;
Let's lose no time. Mark, the same noise again.
Marg. What noise? why look ye pale? I hear
no stirring.
This goblin in the vault will be so tippled!
You are not well, I know by your flying fancy;
Your body's ill at ease; your wounds—
Duke. I have none; I am as lusty and as full
of health,
High in my blood!—
Marg. Weak in your blood, you would say;
How wretched is my case, willing to please ye,
And find you so disabled!
Duke. Believe me, lady,
Marg. I know you will venture all you have
to satisfy me;
Your life, I know; but is it fit I spoil ye?
Is it my love, do you think?
Cat. [*Below.*] Here's to the duke.
Duke. It named me, certainly;
I heard it plainly sound.
Marg. You are hurt mortally,
And fitter for your prayers, sir, than pleasure.
What starts you make! I would not kiss you
wantonly
For the world's wealth: have I secured my husband,
And put all doubts aside, to be deluded?
Cat. [*Below.*] I come, I come.
Duke. Heaven bless me!
Marg. And bless us both, for sure this is the
devil;
I plainly heard it now; he will come to fetch ye;
A very spirit, for he spoke under ground,

And spoke to you just as you would have snatcht me:
You are a wicked man, and sure this haunts ye;
Would you were out o' th' house!
Duke. I would I were,
O' that condition I had leapt a window.
Marg. And that's the least leap, if you mean to 'scape, sir.
Why what a frantic man were you to come here,
What a weak man to counterfeit deep wounds,
To wound another deeper?
Duke. Are you honest then?
Marg. Yes, then, and now, and ever, and excellent honest,
And exercise this pastime but to shew ye,
Great men are fools sometimes as well as wretches.
Would you were well hurt, with any hope of life,
Cut to the brains, or run clean through the body,
To get out quietly as you got in, sir.
I wish it like a friend that loves you dearly;
For if my husband take ye, and take ye thus a counterfeit,
One that would clip his credit out of his honour,
He must kill ye presently;
There is no mercy, nor an hour of pity;
And for me to entreat in such an agony,
Would shew me little better than one guilty:
Have you any mind to a lady now?
Duke. Would I were off fair!
If ever lady caught me in a trap more—
Marg. If you be well and lusty; fie, fie, shake not!
You say you love me; come, come, bravely now,
Despise all danger, I am ready for ye.
Duke. She mocks my misery; thou cruel lady!
Marg. Thou cruel lord! wouldst thou betray my honesty?
Betray it in mine own house, wrong my husband,
Like a night-thief, thou dar'st not name by daylight?
Duke. I am most miserable.
Marg. You are indeed,
And, like a foolish thing, you have made yourself so;
Could not your own discretion tell ye, sir,
When I was married I was none of yours?
Your eyes were then commanded to look off me,
And I now stand in a circle, and secure,
Your spells nor power can never reach my body;
Mark me but this, and then, sir, be most miserable;
'Tis sacrilege to violate a wedlock;
You rob two temples, make yourself twice guilty,
You ruin hers, and spot her noble husband's.
Duke. Let me begone; I'll never more attempt ye.
Marg. You cannot go, 'tis not in me to save ye;
Dare ye do ill, and poorly then shrink under it?
Were I the duke Medina, I would fight now,
For you must fight, and bravely, it concerns you.
You do me double wrong if you sneak off, sir,
And all the world would say I loved a coward;
And you must die too, for you will be killed,
And leave your youth, your honour, and your state,
And all those dear delights you worshipped here.
[*Noise below.*
Duke. The noise again!
Cac. [*Below.*] Some small beer, if you love me.
Marg. The devil haunts you sure, your sins are mighty;
A drunken devil too, to plague your villany.
Duke. Preserve me but this once.
Marg. There's a deep well
In the next yard, if you dare venture drowning;
It is but death.
Duke. I would not die so wretchedly.
Marg. Out of a garret window I'll let you down then.
But say the rope be rotten? 'tis huge high too.
Duke. Have you no mercy?
Marg. Now you are frighted thoroughly,
And find what 'tis to play the fool in folly,
And see with clear eyes your detested folly,
I'll be your guard.
Duke. And I'll be your true servant,
Ever from this hour virtuously to love ye,
Chastely and modestly to look upon ye,
And here I seal it.
Marg. I may kiss a stranger, for you must now be so.

Enter LEON, JUAN, ALONZO, SANCHIO.

Leon. How do you, my lord?
Methinks you look but poorly on this matter.
Has my wife wounded ye? ye were well before.
Pray, sir, be comforted, I have forgot all,
Truly forgiven too. Wife, you are a right one,
And now with unknown nations I dare trust ye.
Juan. No more feigned fights, my lord; they never prosper.
Leon. Who's this? the devil in the vault?
Alt. 'Tis he, sir, and as lovingly drunk as though he had studied it.
Cac. Give me a cup of sack, and kiss me, lady;
Kiss my sweet face, and make thy husband cuckold;
An ocean of sweet sack; shall we speak treason?
Leon. He is devilish drunk.
Duke. I had thought he had been a devil,
He made as many noises, and as horrible.
Leon. Oh, a true lover, sir, will lament loudly.
Which of the butts is your mistress?
Cac. Butt in thy belly.
Leon. There's two in thine, I'm sure, 'tis grown so monstrous.
Caca. Butt in thy face.
Leon. Go carry him to sleep;
A fool's love should be drunk; he has paid well for't too.
When he is sober, let him out to rail,
Or hang himself; there will be no loss of him.
[*Exeunt* CAC. *and Servant.*

Enter PEREZ *and* ESTIFANIA.

Leon. Who's this? my mahound cousin?

Per. Good sir, 'tis very good; would I had a house too,
For there is no talking in the open air;
My termagant coz, I would be bold to tell ye,
I durst be merry too: I tell you plainly,
You have a pretty seat, you have the luck on't,
A pretty lady too; I have missed both,
My carpenter built in a mist, I thank him;
Do me the courtesy to let me see it,
See it but once more. But I shall cry for anger.
I'll hire a chandler's shop close under ye,
And for my foolery, sell soap and whip-cord;
Nay if you do not laugh now, and laugh heartily,
You are a fool, coz.
Leon. I must laugh a little;
And now I have done, coz, thou shalt live with me,
My merry coz, the world shall not divorce us;
Thou art a valiant man, and thou shalt never want;
Will this content thee?
Per. I'll cry, and then I'll be thankful,
Indeed I will, and I'll be honest to ye.
I would live a swallow here, I must confess.
Wife, I forgive thee all, if thou be honest;
At thy peril, I believe thee excellent.
Estif. If I prove otherwise, let me beg first.
Hold, this is yours, some recompence for service;
Use it to nobler ends than he that gave it.
Duke. And this is yours, your true commission, sir;
Now you are a captain.
Leon. You are a noble prince, sir,
And now a soldier; gentlemen, we all rejoice in't.
Juan. Sir, I shall wait upon you through all fortunes.
Alon. And I.
Alt. And I must needs attend my mistress.
Leon. Will you go, sister?
Alt. Yes indeed, good brother;
I have two ties, mine own blood
And my mistress.
Marg. Is she your sister?
Leon. Yes indeed, good wife,
And my best sister;
For she proved so, wench,
When she deceived you with a loving husband,
Alt. I would not deal so, truly, for a stranger.
Marg. Well I could chide ye,
But it must be lovingly, and like a sister;
I'll bring ye on your way, and feast ye nobly,
For now I have an honest heart to love ye,
And then deliver you to the blue Neptune.
Juan. Your colours you must wear, and wear 'em proudly;
Wear 'em before the bullet, and in blood too;
And all the world shall know
We are Virtue's servants.
Duke. And all the world shall know, a noble mind
Makes women beautiful, and envy blind.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

Good night, our worthy friends, and may you part
Each with as merry and as free a heart
As you came hither: to those noble eyes,
That deign to smile on our poor faculties,
And give a blessing to our labouring ends,
As we hope many, to such fortune sends
Their own desires, wives fair as light, as chaste;
To those that live by spite, wives made in haste.

THE

CHANCES.

ALTERED FROM

FLETCHER, BY THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Duke of FERRARA.
PETRUCHIO, *Governor of Bologna.*
Don JOHN, } *two Spanish Gentlemen, and*
Don FREDERICK, } *Comrades.*
ANTONIO, *an old stout Gentlemen, Kinsman to Petruchio.*
Three Gentlemen, Friends to the Duke.
Three Gentlemen, Friends to Petruchio.
FRANCISCO.
Musician.
Antonio's Boy.
PETER *and* ANTHONY, } *Two Servants to Don John and Frederick.*
Surgeon.

WOMEN.

1*st* CONSTANTIA, *Sister to Petruchio, and Mistress to the Duke.*
Kinswoman.
Landlady to Don John and Frederick.
2*d* CONSTANTIA, *Whore to Antonio.*
Bawd.
Mother-in-law.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter PETER *and* ANTHONY, *two serving Men.*

Pet. WOULD we were remov'd from this town, Anthony,
That we might taste some quiet; for mine own part,
I'm almost melted with continual trotting
After enquiries, dreams, and revelations,
Of who knows whom or where. Serve wenching soldiers!
I'll serve a priest in Lent first, and eat bell-ropes.
Ant. Thou art the forwardest fool—
Pet. Why, good tame Anthony,
Tell me but this; to what end came we hither?
Ant. To wait upon our masters.
Pet. But how, Anthony?
Answer me that; resolve me there, good Anthony.
Ant. To serve their uses.
Pet. Shew your uses, Anthony.
Ant. To be employ'd in any thing.
Pet. No, Anthony,
Not any thing, I take it, nor that thing
We travel to discover, like new islands;
A salt itch serve such uses! in things of moment,
Concerning things I grant ye, not things errant,
Sweet ladies' things, and things to thank the surgeon:
In no such things, sweet Anthony. Put case—
Ant. Come, come, all will be mended: this invisible woman,
Of infinite shape and beauty,
That bred all this trouble to no purpose,
They are determin'd now no more to think on.
Pet. Were there ever
Men known to run mad with report before?
Or wander after what they know not where
To find; or, if found, how to enjoy? Are men's brains

Made now-a-days with malt, that their affections
Are never sober; but, like drunken people,
Founder at every new fame? I do believe
That men in love are ever drunk, as drunken men
Are ever loving.
Ant. Pr'ythee, be thou sober,
And know that they are none of those, not guilty
Of the least vanity of love: only a doubt
Fame might too far report, or rather flatter
The graces of this woman, made them curious
To find the truth; which, since they find so,
Lock'd up from their searches; they are now resolv'd
To give the wonder over.
Pet. Would they were resolv'd
To give me some new shoes too; for I'll be sworn
These are e'en worn out to the reasonable soles
In their good worships' business: and some sleep
Would not do much amiss, unless they mean
To make a bellman of me. Here they come.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Don JOHN *and* Don FREDERICK.

John. I would we could have seen her though; for sure
She must be some rare creature, or report lies:
All men's reports too.
Fred. I could well wish I had seen Constantia:
But, since she is so conceal'd, plac'd where
No knowledge can come near her, so guarded
As 'twere impossible, though known, to reach her,
I have made up my belief.
John. Hang me, from this hour,
If I more think upon her;
But, as she came a strange report unto me,
So the next fame shall lose her.
Fred. 'Tis the next way—
But whither are you walking?
John. My old round,
After my meat, and then to bed.
Fred. 'Tis healthful.
John. Will you not stir?
Fred. I have a little business.
John. I'd lay my life, this lady still——
Fred. Then you would lose it.
John. Pray, let's walk together.
Fred. Now I cannot.
John. I have something to impart.
Fred. An hour hence
I will not miss to meet ye.
John. Where?
Fred. I' th' high street;
For, not to lie, I have a few devotions
To do first, then I'm yours.
John. Remember. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and two Gentlemen.*

Ant. Cut his wind-pipe, I say.
1 *Gent.* Fie, Antonio.
Ant. Or knock his brains out first, and then forgive him.
If you do thrust, be sure it be to th' hilts,
A surgeon may see through him.
2 *Gent.* You are too violent.
1 *Gent.* Too open, indiscreet.
Petr. Am I not ruin'd?
The honour of my house cnock'd? my blood poison'd?
My credit and my name?
2 *Gent.* Be sure it be so,
Before you use this violence. Let not doubt
And a suspecting anger so much sway you;
Your wisdom may be question'd.
Ant. I say, kill him,
And then dispute the cause; cut off what may be,
And what is shall be safe.
2 *Gent.* Hang up a true man,
Because 'tis possible he may be thievish:
Alas! is this good justice?
Petr. I know as certain
As day must come again, as clear as truth,
And open as belief can lay it to me,
That I am basely wrong'd, wrong'd above recompence,
Maliciously abus'd, blasted for ever
In name and honour, lost to all remembrance,
But what is smear'd and shameful: I must kill him,
Necessity compels me.
2 *Gent.* But think better.
Petr. There's no other cure left; yet witness with me
All that is fair in man, all that is noble:
I am not greedy for this life I seek for,
Nor thirst to shed man's blood; and would 'twere possible,
I wish it with my soul, so much I tremble
T' offend the sacred image of my Maker,
My sword should only kill his crimes: no, 'tis
Honour, honour, my noble friends, that idol honour,
That all the world now worships, not Petruchio,
Must do this justice.
Ant. Let it once be done,
And 'tis no matter whether you or honour,
Or both, be accessary.
2 *Gent.* Do you weigh, Petruchio,
The value of the person, power, and greatness,
And what this spark may kindle?
Petr. To perform it,
So much I am tied to reputation,
And credit of my house, let it raise wild-fires,
And storms that toss me into everlasting ruin,
Yet I must through; if ye dare side me.
Ant. Dare!
Petr. Y' are friends indeed: if not!
2 *Gent.* Here's none flies from you;
Do it in what design you please, we'll back ye.
1 *Gent.* Is the cause so mortal? nothing but his life?
Petr. Believe me,
A less offence has been the desolation
Of a whole name.
1 *Gent.* No other way to purge it?
Petr. There is, but never to be hop'd for.
2 *Gent.* Think an hour more,
And if then you find no safer road to guide ye,
We'll set our rests too.

Ant. Mine's up already,
And hang him for my part, goes less than life.
2 *Gent.* If we see noble cause, 'tis like our swords
May be as free and forward as your words.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Don JOHN.

John. The civil order of this city Naples
Makes it belov'd and honour'd of all travellers,
As a most safe retirement in all troubles;
Beside the wholesome seat and noble temper
Of those minds that inhabit it, safely wise,
And to all strangers courteous. But I see
My admiration has drawn night upon me,
And longer to expect my friend may pull me
Into suspicion of too late a stirrer,
Which all good governments are jealous of.
I'll home, and think at liberty: yet certain,
'Tis not so far night as I thought; for see,
A fair house yet stands open, yet all about it
Are close, and no lights stirring; there may be foul play;
I'll venture to look in. If there be knaves,
I may do a good office.
Within. Signior!
John. What! How is this?
Within. Signior Fabritio!
John. I'll go nearer.
Within. Fabritio?
John. This is a woman's tongue; here may be good done.
Within. Who's there? Fabritio?
John. Ay.
Within. Where are you?
John. Here.
Within. O, come for Heaven's sake!
John. I must see what this means.

Enter a Woman with a Child.

Wom. I have stay'd this long hour for you; make no noise;
For things are in strange trouble. Here, be secret.
'Tis worth your care: begone now; more eyes watch us
Than may be for our safeties.
John. Hark ye.
Wom. Peace; good night. [*Exit.*
John. She's gone, and I am loaden. Fortune for me!
It weighs well, and it feels well; it may chance
To be some pack of worth: by th' mass, 'tis heavy!
If it be coin or jewels, it is worth welcome.
I'll ne'er refuse a fortune; I am confident
'Tis of no common price. Now to my lodging:
If it be right, I'll bless this night. [*Exit.*

Enter Don FREDERICK.

Fred. 'Tis strange,
I cannot meet him; sure he has encounter'd
Some light o' love or other, and there means
To play at in and in for this night. Well, Don John,
If you do spring a leak, or get an itch,
Till you claw off your curl'd pate, thank your night-walks;
You must be still a boot-haling. One round more,
Though it be late, I'll venture to discover ye;
I do not like your out-leaps. [*Exit.*

Enter Duke and three Gentlemen.

Duke. Welcome to town. Are ye all fit?
1 *Gent.* To point, sir.
Duke. Where are the horses?
2 *Gent.* Where they were appointed.
Duke. Be private; and whatsoever fortune
Offer itself, let us stand sure.
3 *Gent.* Fear us not.
Ere you shall be endanger'd or deluded,
We'll make a black night on't.
Duke. No more, I know it;
You know your quarters.
1 *Gent.* Will you go alone, sir?
Duke. Ye shall not be far from me, the least noise
Shall bring ye to my rescue.
2 *Gent.* We are counsell'd. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Don JOHN.

John. Was ever man so paid for being curious?
Ever so bobb'd for searching out adventures,
As I am? Did the devil lead me? Must I needs be peeping
Into men's houses where I had no business,
And make myself a mischief? 'Tis well carried!
I must take other men's occasions on me,
And be I know not whom: most finely handled!
What have I got by this now? What's the purchase?
A piece of evening arras-work, a child,
Indeed an infidel! This comes of peeping!
A lump got out of laziness! Good white bread,
Let's have no bawling with ye. 'Sdeath, have I
Known wenches thus long, all the ways of wenches,
Their snares and subtleties? Have I read over
All their school learning, dived into their quiddits,
And am I now bumfiddled with a bastard!
Fetch'd over with a card o' five, and in my old days,
After the dire massacre of a million
Of maidenheads, caught the common way, i' th' night too
Under another's name, to make the matter
Carry more weight about it? Well, Don John,
You will be wiser one day, when ye've purchas'd
A bevy of those butter-prints together,
With searching out conceal'd iniquities,
Without commission. Why it would never grieve me,
If I had got this gingerbread: never stir'd me,
So I had had a stroke for it; 't had been justice
Then to have kept it; but to raise a dairy,
For other men's adultery, consume myself in caudles,

And scouring work, in nurses, bells, and babies,
Only for charity, for mere I thank you,
A little troubles me: the least touch for it,
Had but my breeches got it, it had contented me.
Whose e'er it is, sure it had a wealthy mother,
For 'tis well cloth'd, and if I be not cozen'd,
Well lin'd within. To leave it here were barbarous,
And ten to one would kill it; a worse sin
Than his that got it. Well, I will dispose on't,
And keep it as they keep death's heads in rings,
To cry *memento* to me—no more peeping.
Now all the danger's to qualify
The good old gentlewoman at whose house we live;
For she will fall upon me with a catechism
Of four hours long: I must endure all;
For I will know this mother. Come, good wonder,
Let you and I be jogging; your starved treble
Will waken the rude watch else. All that be
Curious night-walkers, may they find my fee!
[*Exit.*

Enter Don FREDERICK.

Fred. Sure he's gone home:
I have beaten all the purlieus,
But cannot bolt him: If he be a bobbing,
'Tis not my care can cure him: to-morrow morning
I shall have further knowledge from a surgeon,
Where he lies moor'd to mend his leaks.

Enter 1*st* CONSTANTIA.

Con. I am ready:
And through a world of dangers am flown to ye.
Be full of haste and care, we are undone else.
Where are your people? Which way must we travel?
For heaven's sake stay not here, sir.
Fred. What may this prove?
Con. Alas! I am mistaken, lost, undone,
For ever perished! Sir, for Heaven's sake, tell me,
Are ye a gentleman?
Fred. I am.
Con. Of this place?
Fred. No, born in Spain.
Con. As ever you lov'd honour,
As ever your desires may gain their end,
Do a poor wretched woman but this benefit,
For I'm forc'd to trust ye.
Fred. Y' have charm'd me,
Humanity and honour bids me help ye:
And if I fail your trust——
Con. The time's too dangerous
To stay your protestations: I believe ye.
Alas! I must believe ye. From this place,
Good, noble sir, remove me instantly.
And for a time, where nothing but yourself,
And honest conversation, may come near me,
In some secure place settle me. What I am,
And why thus boldly I commit my credit
Into a stranger's hand, the fear and dangers
That force me to this wild course, at more leisure
I shall reveal unto you.
Fred. Come, be hearty;
He must strike through my life that takes you from me.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and two Gentlemen.*

Petr. He will sure come: are ye all well arm'd!
Ant. Never fear us:
Here's that will make 'em dance without a fiddle.
Petr. We are to look for no weak foes, my friends,
Nor unadvised ones.
Ant. Best gamesters make the best play;
We shall fight close and home then.
1 *Gent.* Antonio,
You are thought too bloody.
Ant. Why? All physicians,
And penny almanacks, allow the opening
Of veins this month. Why do you talk of bloody?
What come we for? to fall to cuffs for apples?
What, would you make the cause a cudgel-quarrel?
Petr. Speak softly, gentle cousin.
Ant. I will speak truly.
What should men do, allied to these disgraces,
Lick o'er his enemy, sit down and dance him?—
2 *Gent.* You are as far o' th' bow-hand now.
Ant. And cry,
That's my fine boy, thou wilt do so no more, child?
Petr. Here are no such cold pities.
Ant. By St Jaques,
They shall not find me one! Here's old tough Andrew,
A special friend of mine, and he but hold,
I'll strike them such a hornpipe! Knocks I come for,
And the best blood I light on: I profess it,
Not to scare costermongers. If I lose my own,
My audit's lost, and farewell five-and-fifty.
Petr. Let's talk no longer. Place yourselves with silence
As I directed ye; and when time calls us,
As ye are friends, so shew yourselves.
Ant. So be it.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Don JOHN *and his Landlady.*

Land. Nay, son, if this be your regard—
John. Good mother—
Land. Good me no goods—Your cousin and yourself
Are welcome to me, whilst you bear yourselves
Like honest and true gentlemen. Bring hither
To my house, that have ever been reputed
A gentlewoman of a decent and a fair carriage,
And so behaved myself——
John. I know you have.
Land. Bring hither, as I say, to make my name
Stink in my neighbour's nostrils, your devices,
Your brats got out of alligant and broken oaths,
Your linsey-woolsey work, your hasty puddings!
I foster up your filch'd iniquities!

You're deceiv'd in me, sir, I am none
Of those receivers.
John. Have I not sworn unto you,
'Tis none of mine, and shew'd you how I found it?
Land. Ye found an easy fool that let you get it.
John. Will you hear me?
Land. Oaths! what care you for oaths to gain your ends;
When ye are high and pamper'd? What saint know ye?
Or what religion, but your purpos'd lewdness,
Is to be look'd for of ye? Nay, I will tell ye—
You will then swear like accus'd cut-purses,
As far off truth too; and lie beyond all falconers:
I'm sick to see this dealing.
John. Heaven forbid, mother.
Land. Nay, I am very sick.
John. Who waits there?
Pet. [*Within.*] Sir!
John. Bring down the bottle of Canary wine.
Land. Exceeding sick, Heaven help me!
John. Haste ye, sirrah.
I must e'en make her drunk. [*Aside.*] Nay, gentle mother—
Land. Now fy upon ye! was it for this purpose,
You fetch'd your evening walks for your devotions?
For this, pretended holiness? No weather,
Not before day, could hold you from the matins.
Were these your bo-peep prayers? Ye've pray'd well,
And with a learned zeal have watch'd well too; your saint
It seems was pleas'd as well. Still sicker, sicker!

Enter PETER *with a Bottle of Wine.*

John. There is no talking to her till I have drench'd her.
Give me. Here, mother, take a good round draught.
It will purge spleen from your spirits; deeper, mother.
Land. Aye, aye, son; you imagine this will mend all.
John. All, i'faith, mother.
Land. I confess the wine
Will do his part.
John. I'll pledge ye.
Land. But, son John——
John. I know your meaning, mother, touch it once more.
Alas! you look not well, take a round draught,
It warms the blood well, and restores the colour,
And then we'll talk at large.
Land. A civil gentleman!
A stranger! one the town holds a good regard of!
John. Nay, I will silence thee there.
Land. One that should weigh his fair name!—Oh, a stitch!
John. There's nothing better for a stitch, good mother,
Make no spare of it as you love your health;
Mince not the matter.
Land. As I said, a gentleman
Lodged in my house! Now Heaven's my comfort, signior!
John. I look'd for this.
Land. I did not think you would have us'd me thus;
A woman of my credit, one, Heaven knows,
That loves you but too tenderly.
John. Dear mother,
I ever found your kindness, and acknowledge it.
Land. No, no, I am a fool to counsel ye. Where's the infant?
Come, let's see your workmanship.
John. None of mine, mother:
But there 'tis, and a lusty one.
Land. Heaven bless thee,
Thou hadst a hasty making; but the best is,
'Tis many a good man's fortune. As I live,
Your own eyes, signior; and the nether lip
As like ye, as ye had spit it.
John. I am glad on't.
Land. Bless me! what things are these?
John. I thought my labour
Was not all lost: 'tis gold, and these are jewels,
Both rich and right, I hope.
Land. Well, well, son John,
I see ye're a woodman, and can choose
Your deer, though it be i' th' dark; all your discretion
Is not yet lost; this was well clapp'd aboard;
Here I am with ye now, when, as they say,
Your pleasure comes with profit; when you must needs do,
Do where you may be done to; 'tis a wisdom
Becomes a young man well: be sure of one thing,
Lose not your labour and your time together;
It seasons of a fool, son; time is precious,
Work wary whilst you have it. Since you must traffic
Sometimes this slippery way, take sure hold, signior;
Trade with no broken merchants; make your lading
As you would make your rest, adventurously,
But with advantage ever.
John. All this time, mother,
The child wants looking to, wants meat and nurses.
Land. Now blessing o' thy heart, it shall have all;
And instantly I'll seek a nurse myself, son.
'Tis a sweet child—Ah, my young Spaniard!
Take you no further care, sir,
John. Yes, of these jewels
I must, by your good leave, mother; these are yours,
To make your care the stronger; for the rest,
I'll find a master; the gold for bringing up on't,
I freely render to your charge.
Land. No more words,
Nor no more children, good son, as you love me;
This may do well.
John. I shall observe your morals.
But where's Don Frederick, mother?
Land. Ten to one,
About the like adventure; he told me,
He was to find you out.

John. Why should he stay us?
There may be some ill chance in't: sleep I will not,
Before I have found him. Now this woman's pleas'd,
I'll seek my friend out, and my care is ease'd.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Duke and three Gentlemen.

1 *Gent.* Believe, sir, 'tis as possible to do it,
As to move the city; the main faction
Swarm through the streets like hornets, and with augurs
Able to ruin states, no safety left us,
Nor means to die like men, if instantly
You draw not back again.
Duke. May he be drawn,
And quarter'd too, that turns now; were I surer
Of death than thou art of thy fears, and with death
More than those fears are too——
1 *Gent.* Sir, I fear not.
Duke. I would not break my vow, start from my honour,
Because I may find danger; wound my soul
To keep my body safe!
1 *Gent.* I speak not, sir,
Out of a baseness to ye.
Duke. No, nor do not
Out of a baseness leave me. What is danger
More than the weakness of our apprehensions?
A poor cold part o' th' blood. Who takes it hold of?
Cowards and wicked livers: valiant minds
Were made masters of it: and as hearty seamen
In desperate storms stem with a little rudder
The tumbling ruins of the ocean;
So with their cause and swords do they do dangers.
Say we were sure to die all in this venture,
As I am confident against it; is there any
Amongst us of so fat a sense, so pamper'd,
Would choose luxuriously to lie a-bed,
And purge away his spirits; send his soul out
In sugar-sops and syrups? Give me dying
As dying ought to be, upon mine enemy;
Parting with mankind, by a man that's manly.
Let them be all the world, and bring along
Cain's envy with them, I will on.
2 *Gent.* You may, sir,
But with what safety?
1 *Gent.* Since 'tis come to dying,
You shall perceive, sir, that here be those amongst us,
Can die as decently as other men,
And with as little ceremony. On, brave sir.
Duke. That's spoken heartily.
1 *Gent.* And he that flinches,
May he die lousy in a ditch.
Duke. No more dying.
There's no such danger in't. What's o'clock?
3 *Gent.* Somewhat above your hour.
Duke. Away then, quickly,
Make no noise, and no trouble will attend us.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* ANTHONY *with a Candle.*

Fred. Give me the candle; so, go you out that way.
Ant. What have we now to do?
Fred. And on your life, sirrah,
Let none come near the door without my knowledge:
No, not my landlady, nor my friend.
Ant. 'Tis done, sir.
Fred. Nor any serious business that concerns me.
Ant. Is the wind there again?
Fred. Be gone.
Ant. I am, sir. [*Exit.*
Fred. Now enter without fear——

Enter 1*st* CONSTANTIA *with a Jewel.*

And, noble lady,
That safety and civility ye wish for
Shall truly here attend you: no rude tongue
Nor rough behaviour knows this place; no wishes,
Beyond the moderation of a man,
Dare enter here. Your own desires and innocence,
Join'd to my vow'd obedience, shall protect ye.
Con. Ye are truly noble,
And worth a woman's trust: let it become me,
(I do beseech you, sir,) for all your kindness,
To render with my thanks this worthless trifle—
I may be longer troublesome.
Fred. Fair offices
Are still their own rewards: heavens bless me, lady,
From selling civil courtesies. May it please ye,
If ye will force a favour to oblige me,
Draw but that cloud aside, to satisfy me,
For what good angel I am engag'd.
Con. It shall be;
For I am truly confident ye are honest,
The piece is scarce worth looking on.
Fred. Trust me,
The abstract of all beauty, soul of sweetness!
Defend me, honest thoughts, I shall grow wild else.
What eyes are there! rather what little heavens,
To stir men's contemplation! What a Paradise
Runs through each part she has! Good blood, be temperate!
I must look off: too excellent an object
Confounds the sense that sees it. Noble lady,
If there be any further service to cast on me,
Let it be worth my life, so much I honour ye,
Or the engagements of whole families.
Con. Your service is too liberal, worthy sir.
Thus far I shall entreat—
Fred. Command me, lady:
You may make your power too poor.
Con. That presently,
With all convenient haste, you will retire
Unto the street you found me in.
Fred. 'Tis done.
Con. There if you find a gentleman oppress'd

With force and violence, do a man's office,
And draw your sword to rescue him.
Fred. He's safe,
Be what he will; and let his foes be devils,
Arm'd with your beauty, I shall conjure them.
Retire, this key will guide ye: all things necessary
Are there before ye.
Con. All my prayers go with ye. [*Exit.*
Fred. Ye clap on proof upon me. Men say, gold
Does all, engages all, works through all dangers:
Now I say, beauty can do more. The king's exchequer,
Nor all his wealthy Indies, could not draw me
Through half those miseries this piece of pleasure
Might make me leap into: we are all like sea-charts,
All our endeavours and our motions
(As they do to the north) still point at beauty,
Still at the fairest; for a handsome woman,
(Setting my soul aside) it should go hard
But I will strain my body; yet to her,
Unless it be her own free gratitude,
Hopes, ye shall die, and thou, tongue, rot within me,
Ere I infringe my faith. Now to my rescue. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter Duke, pursued by PETRUCHIO, ANTONIO, *and that Faction.*

Duke. You will not all oppress me?
Ant. Kill him i' th' wanton eye:
Let me come to him.
Duke. Then you shall buy me dearly.
Petr. Say you so, sir?
Ant. I say, cut his wezand, spoil his peeping:
Have at your love-sick heart, sir.

Enter Don JOHN.

John. Sure 'tis fighting!
My friend may be engaged. Fie, gentlemen,
This is unmanly odds.
[*Duke falls; Don* JOHN *bestrides him.*
Ant. I'll stop you mouth, sir.
John. Nay, then have at thee freely.
There's a plumb, sir, to satisfy your longing.
Petr. Away; I hope I have sped him: here comes rescue!
We shall be endanger'd.—Where's Antonio?
Ant. I must have one thrust more, sir.
John. Come up to me.
Ant. A mischief confound your fingers!
Petr. How is it?
Ant. Well:
He's given me my *quietus est*; I felt him
In my small guts; I'm sure he's feez'd me;
This comes of siding with you.
2 Gent. Can you go, sir?
Ant. I shall go, man, and my head were off;
Never talk of going.
Petr. Come, all shall be well then.
I hear more rescue coming.
[*Trampling within.*

Enter the Duke's Faction.

Ant. Let's turn back then;
My skull's uncloven yet, let me kill.
Petr. Away, for heaven's sake, with him.
[*Exit cum suis.*
John. How is it?
Duke. Well, sir,
Only a little stagger'd.
Duke's fact. Let's pursue them.
Duke. No, not a man, I charge ye. Thanks, good coat,
Thou hast sav'd me a shrewd welcome: 'Twas put home
With a good mind too, I'm sure on't.
John. Are you safe then?
Duke. My thanks to you, brave sir, whose timely valour,
And manly courtesy, came to my rescue.
John. Ye had foul play offer'd ye, and shame befal him
That can pass by oppression.
Duke. May I crave, sir,
By this much honour more, to know your name,
And him I am so bound to?
John. For the bond, sir,
'Tis every good man's tie: to know me further,
Will little profit you; I am a stranger,
My country Spain, my name Don John, a gentleman
That came abroad to travel.
Duke. I have heard, sir,
Much worthy mention of ye, yet I find
Fame short of what ye are.
John. You are pleas'd, sir,
To express your courtesy: may I demand
As freely what you are, and what mischance
Cast you into this danger?
Duke. For this present
I must desire your pardon: you shall know me
Ere it be long, sir, and nobler thanks,
Than now my will can render.
John. Your will's your own, sir.
Duke. What is't you look for, sir? Have you lost any thing?
John. Only my hat i' th' scuffle;—sure these fellows
Were night-snaps.
Duke. No, believe me, sir: Pray use mine,
For 'twill be hard to find your own now.
John. No, sir.
Duke. Indeed you shall, I can command another:
I do beseech you, honour me.

John. Well, sir, then I will;
And so I'll take my leave.
Duke. Within these few days
I hope I shall be happy in your knowledge,
Till when I love your memory. [*Exit cum suis.*

Enter FREDERICK.

John. I'm your's.
This is some noble fellow!
Fred. 'Tis his tongue sure;
Don John!
John. Don Frederick!
Fred. Y' are fairly met, sir!
I thought ye had been a bat-fowling. Pr'ythee tell me
What revelation hast thou had to-night,
That home was never thought on?
John. Revelations!
I'll tell thee, Frederick: but before I tell thee,
Settle thy understanding.
Fred. 'Tis prepar'd, sir.
John. Why, then, mark what shall follow:
This night, Frederick, this bawdy night—
Fred. I thought no less.
John. This blind night,
What dost thou think I have got?
Fred. The pox, it may be.
John. Would 'twere no worse: ye talk of revelations;
I have got a revelation will reveal me
An arrant coxcomb whilst I live.
Fred. What is't?
Thou hast lost nothing!
John. No, I have got, I tell thee.
Fred. What hast thou got?
John. One of the infantry, a child.
Fred. How!
John. A chopping child, man!
Fred. Give you joy, sir.
John. A lump of lewdness, Frederick; that's the truth on't.
This town's abominable.
Fred. I still told ye, John,
Your whoring must come home; I counsell'd ye:
But where no grace is—
John. 'Tis none of mine, man.
Fred. Answer the parish so.
John. Cheated in troth
(Peeping into a house) by whom I know not,
Nor where to find the place again; no, Frederick,
'Tis no poor one,
That's my best comfort, for't has brought about it
Enough to make it man.
Fred. Where is't?
John. At home.
Fred. A saving voyage; but what will you say, signior,
To him that, searching out your serious worship,
Has met a strange fortune?
John. How, good Frederick?
A militant girl to this boy would hit it.
Fred. No, mine's a nobler venture: What do you think, sir,
Of a distressed lady, one whose beauty
Would over-sell all Italy?
John. Where is she?—
Fred. A woman of that rare behaviour,
So qualified, as admiration
Dwells round about her; of that perfect spirit—
John. Ay marry, sir?
Fred. That admirable carriage,
That sweetness in discourse; young as the morning,
Her blushes staining his.
John. But where's this creature?
Shew me but that.
Fred. That's all one, she's forthcoming.
I have her sure, boy.
John. Hark ye, Frederick;
What truck betwixt my infant?
Fred. 'Tis too light, sir;
Stick to your charge, good Don John, I am well.
John. But is there such a wench?
Fred. First tell me this;
Did you not lately, as you walk'd along,
Discover people that were arm'd, and likely
To do offence?
John. Yes, marry, and they urg'd it
As far as they had spirit.
Fred. Pray go forward.
John. A gentleman I found engag'd amongst 'em,
It seems of noble breeding, I'm sure brave metal;
As I returned to look you, I set into him,
And without hurt, I thank Heaven, rescued him.
Fred. My work's done then:
And now, to satisfy you, there is a woman,
Oh, John! there is a woman——
John. Oh, where is she?
Fred. And one of no less worth than I told;
And which is more, fall'n under my protection.
John. I am glad of that;—forward, sweet Frederick!
Fred. And which is more than that, by this night's wand'ring;
And which is most of all, she is at home too, sir.
John. Come, let's begone then.
Fred. Yes, but 'tis most certain
You cannot see her, John.
John. Why?
Fred. She has sworn me,
That none else shall come near her; not my mother,
Till some doubts are clear'd.
John. Not look upon her? What chamber is she in?
Fred. In ours.
John. Let us go, I say:
A woman's oaths are wafers, and break with making.
They must for modesty a little: We all know it.
Fred. No, I'll assure ye, sir.
John. Not see her!
I smell an old dog-trick of yours.—Well, Frederick,
Ye talk'd to me of whoring; let's have fair play,
Square dealing, I would wish ye.
Fred. When 'tis come

(Which I know never will be) to that issue,
Your spoon shall be as deep as mine, sir.
John. Tell me,
And tell me true, is the cause honourable,
Or for your ease?
Fred. By all our friendship, John,
'Tis honest, and of great end.
John. I'm answer'd;
But let me see her, though;—leave the door open
As you go in.
Fred. I dare not.
John. Not wide open,
But just so as a jealous husband
Would level at his wanton wife through.
Fred. That courtesy,
If you desire no more, and keep it strictly,
I dare afford ye: come, 'tis now near morning.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter PETER *and* ANTHONY.

Pet. Nay, the old woman's gone too.
Ant. She's a cater-wauling
Amongst the gutters. But conceive me, Peter,
Where our good masters should be.
Pet. Where they should be,
I do conceive; but where they are, good Anthony—
Ant. Ay, there it goes: my master's bo-peep with me,
With his sly popping in and out again,
Argu'd a cause—Hark! [*Lute sounds.*
Pet. What?
Ant. Dost not hear a lute?
Again!
Pet. Where is't?
Ant. Above, in my master's chamber.
Pet. There's no creature: he hath the key himself, man.
Ant. This is his lute, let him have it.
[*Sings within a little.*
Pet. I grant ye; but who strikes it?
Ant. An admirable voice too, hark ye.
Pet. Anthony,
Art sure we are at home?
Ant. Without all doubt, Peter.
Pet. Then this must be the devil.
Ant. Let it be.
Good devil, sing again: O dainty devil,
Peter, believe it, a most delicate devil,
The sweetest devil——

Enter FREDERICK *and Don* JOHN.

Fred. If you would leave peeping.
John. I cannot, by no means.
Fred. Then come in softly;
And as you love your faith, presume no further
Than you have promis'd.
John. Basco.
Fred. What makes you up so early, sir?
John. You, sir, in your contemplations?
Pet. O pray ye peace, sir!
Fred. Why peace, sir?
Pet. Do you hear?
John. 'Tis your lute; she's playing on't.
Ant. The house is haunted, sir:
For this we have heard this half hour.
Fred. Ye saw nothing?
Ant. Not I.
Pet. Nor I, sir.
Fred. Get your breakfast then,
And make no words on't: we'll undertake the spirit,
If it be one.
Ant. This is no devil, Peter:
Mum! there be bats abroad. [*Exeunt ambo.*
Fred. Stay, now she sings.
John. An angel's voice, I'll swear.
Fred. Why dost thou shrug so?
Either allay this heat, or, as I live,
I will not trust ye.
John. Pass, I warrant ye. [*Exeunt.*

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA.

Con. To curse those stars that men say govern us,
To rail at fortune, to fall out with fate,
And tax the general world, will help me nothing:
Alas! I am the same still, neither are they
Subject to helps or hurts; our own desires
Are our own fates, and our own stars all our fortune;
Which as we sway 'em, so abuse or bless us.

Enter FREDERICK *and Don* JOHN, *peeping.*

Fred. Peace to your meditations.
John. Pox upon ye,
Stand out of the light.
Con. I crave your mercy, sir!
My mind, o'ercharg'd with care, made me unmannerly.
Fred. Pray ye set that mind at rest, all shall be perfect.
John. I like the body rare; a handsome body,
A wond'rous handsome body; would she would turn!
See, and that spiteful puppy be not got
Between me and my light again!
Fred. 'Tis done,
As all that you command shall be:
The gentleman is safely off all danger.
John. Rare creature!
Con. How shall I thank ye, sir? how satisfy?
Fred. Speak softly, gentle lady, all's rewarded.
Now does he melt like marmalade.
John. Nay, 'tis certain,
Thou art the sweetest woman that eyes e'er look'd on.
Fred. Has none disturb'd ye?
Con. Not any, sir, nor any sound came near me;
I thank your care.
Fred. 'Tis well.
John. I would fain pray now,
But the devil, and that flesh there o' th' world——
What are we made to suffer!
Fred. He'll enter—
Pull in your head and be hang'd.
John. Hark ye, Frederick,
I have brought you home your pack-saddle:

Fred. Pox upon ye!
Con. Nay, let him enter—Fie, my lord the duke,
Stand peeping at your friends?
Fred. Ye are cozen'd, lady,
Here is no duke.
Con. I know him full well, signior.
John. Hold thee there, wench.
Fred. This mad brain'd fool will spoil all.
Con. I do beseech your grace come in.
John. My grace!
There was a word of comfort.
Fred. Shall he enter,
Whoe'er he be?
John. Well follow'd, Frederick.
Con. With all my heart.

Enter DON JOHN.

Fred. Come in then.
John. Bless ye, lady.
Fred. Nay, start not; though he be a stranger to ye,
He's of a noble strain, my kinsman, lady,
My countryman, and fellow-traveller:
One bed contains us ever, one purse feeds us,
And one faith free between us: do not fear him,
He's truly honest.
John. That's a lie.
Fred. And trusty,
Beyond your wishes: valiant to defend,
And modest to converse with as your blushes.
John. Now may I hang myself; this commendation
Has broke the neck of all my hopes: for now
Must I cry, no forsooth, and ay forsooth, and surely,
And truly as I live, and as I am honest.
He's done these things for nonce too; for he knows,
Like a most envious rascal as he is,
I am not honest
This way: he's watch'd his time,
But I shall quit him.
Con. Sir, I credit ye.
Fred. Go salute her, John.
John. Plague o' your commendations.
Con. Sir, I shall now desire to be a trouble.
John. Never to me, sweet lady; thus I seal
My faith, and all my services.
Con. One word, signior.
John. Now 'tis impossible I should be honest.
What points she at? my leg, I warrant: or
My well-knit body: sit fast, Don Frederick.
Fred. 'Twas given him by that gentleman
You took such care of; his own being lost i' th' scuffle.
Con. With much joy may he wear it; 'tis a right one,
I can assure ye, gentlemen, and right happy
May he be in all fights for that noble service.
Fred. Why do you blush?
Con. It had almost cozen'd me,
But, not to lie, when I saw that, I look'd for
Another owner of it: but 'tis well.
Fred. Who's there? [*Knocks within.*
Stand ye a little close. Come in, sir. [*Exit* CON.

Enter ANTHONY.

Now, what's the news with you?
Ant. There is a gentleman without
Would speak with Don John.
John. Who, sir?
Ant. I do not know, sir, but he shews a man
Of no mean reckoning.
Fred. Let him shew his name,
And then return a little wiser. [*Exit* ANT.
How do you like her, John?
John. As well as you, Frederick,
For all I am honest; you shall find it too.
Fred. Art thou not honest?
John. Art thou an ass?
And modest as her blushes! What blockhead
Would e'er have popp'd out such a dry apology
For his dear friend? and to a gentlewoman,
A woman of her youth and delicacy?
They are arguments to draw them to abhor us.
An honest moral man! 'tis for a constable;
A handsome man, a wholesome man, a tough man,
A liberal man, a likely man, a man
Made up like Hercules, unslack'd with service;
The same to-night, to-morrow night, the next night,
And so to perpetuity of pleasures:
These had been things to hearken to, things catching;
But you have such a spiced consideration,
Such qualms upon your worship's conscience,
Such chilblains in your blood, that all things prick ye,
Which nature and the liberal world make custom;
And nothing but fair honour, O sweet honour,
Hang up your eunuch honour. That I was trusty,
And valiant, were things well put in; but modest!
A modest gentleman! O, wit, where wast thou?
Fred. I am sorry, John.
John. My lady's gentlewoman
Would laugh me to a school-boy, make me blush
With playing with my cod-piece point: fie on thee,
A man of thy discretion!
Fred. It shall be mended;
And henceforth ye shall have your due.

Enter ANTHONY.

John. I look for't. How now, who is't?
Ant. A gentleman of this city,
And calls himself Petruchio.
John. I'll attend him.

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA.

Con. How did he call himself?
Fred. Petruchio.
Does it concern ye aught?
Con. O, gentlemen,
The hour of my destruction is come on me!
I am discover'd, lost, left to my ruin—
As ever ye have pity——
John. Do not fear.
Let the great devil come, he shall come through me first:
Lost here, and we about ye!

Fred. Fall before us!
Con. O my unfortunate estate! all angers
Compar'd to his, to his——
Fred. Let his and all men's,
Whilst we have power and life—stand up, for Heaven's sake!
Con. I have offended Heaven too; yet Heaven knows—
John. We are all evil:
Yet heaven forbid we should have our deserts.
What is he?
Con. Too, too near my offence, sir:
O he will cut me piece-meal.
Fred. 'Tis no treason?
John. Let it be what it will, if he cut here,
I'll find him out work.
Fred. He must buy you dear,
With more than common lives.
John. Fear not, nor weep not:
By Heaven, I'll fire the town before ye perish,
And then the more the merrier, we'll jog with ye.
Fred. Come in, and dry your eyes.
John. Pray no more weeping:
Spoil a sweet face for nothing! My return
Shall end all this, I warrant ye.
Con. Heaven grant it may. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO *with a Letter.*

Petr. This man should be of quality and worth
By Don Alvaro's letter, for he gives
No slight recommendations of him:
I'll e'en make use of him.

Enter Don JOHN.

John. Save ye, sir; I am sorry
My business was so unmannerly, to make ye
Wait thus long here.
Petr. Occasions must be serv'd, sir:
But is your name Don John?
John. It is, sir.
Petr. Then,
First for your own brave sake I must embrace ye:
Next, for the credit of your noble friend,
Hernanda de Alvara, make ye mine:
Who lays his charge upon me in this letter
To look ye out, and
Whilst your occasions make you resident
In this place, to supply ye, love and honour ye;
Which had I known sooner——
John. Noble sir,
You'll make my thanks too poor: I wear a sword, sir,
And have a service to be still dispos'd of,
As you shall please command it.
Petr. That manly courtesy is half my business, sir:
And, to be short, to make ye know I honour ye,
And in all points believe your worth like oracle,
This day, Petruchio,
A man that may command the strength of this place,
Hazard the boldest spirits, hath made choice
Only of you, and in a noble office.
John. Forward, I am free to entertain it.
Petr. Thus then;
I do beseech ye mark me.
John. I shall, sir.
Petr. Ferrara's duke, would I might call him worthy,
But that he has razed out from his family,
As he has mine with infamy; this man,
Rather this powerful monster, we being left
But two of all our house to stock our memories,
My sister Constantia and myself, with arts and witchcrafts,
Vows and such oaths Heaven has no mercy for,
Drew to dishonour this weak maid by stealth,
And secret passages I knew not of.
Oft he obtain'd his wishes, oft abus'd her,
I am asham'd to say the rest: this purchas'd,
And his hot blood allay'd, he left her,
And all our name to ruin.
John. This was foul play,
And ought to be rewarded so.
Petr. I hope so.
He 'scap'd me yester-night;
Which if he dare again adventure for——
John. Pray, sir, what commands have you to lay on me?
Petr. Only thus; by word of mouth to carry him
A challenge from me, that so (if he have honour in him)
We may decide all difference between us.
John. Fair and noble,
And I will do it home. When shall I visit ye?
Petr. Please you this afternoon, I will ride with you,
For at the castle six miles hence, we are sure
To find him.
John. I'll be ready.
Petr. My man shall wait here,
To conduct you to my house.
John. I shall not fail ye. [*Exit* PETR.

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. How now?
John. All's well, and better than thou couldst expect, for this wench here is certainly no maid: and I have hopes she is the same that our two curious coxcombs have been so long a hunting after.
Fred. Why do ye hope so?
John. Why, because first she is no maid, and next because she is handsome; there are two reasons for you: now do you find out a third, a better if you can. For take this, Frederick, for a certain rule, since she loves the sport, she'll never give it over; and therefore (if we have good luck) in time may fall to our share.
Fred. Very pretty reasons indeed! But I thought you had known some particulars, that made you conclude this to be the woman.
John. Yes, I know her name is Constantia.
Fred. That now is something; but I cannot believe her dishonest for all this: she has not one loose thought about her.
John. It's no matter, she's loose i' th' hilts, by heaven. There has been stirring, fumbling with linen, Frederick.
Fred. There may be such a slip.
John. And will be, Frederick, whilst the old

game's a-foot. I fear the boy too will prove her's I took up.

Fred. Good circumstances may cure all this yet.

John. There thou hit'st it, Frederick. Come, let's walk in, and comfort her—that she is here, is nothing yet suspected. Anon I shall tell thee why her brother came, (who by this light is a noble fellow) and what honour he has done to me, a stranger, in calling me to serve him. There be irons heating for some, on my word, Frederick. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter Landlady and ANTHONY.

Land. Come, sir, who is it keeps your master company?

Ant. I say to you, Don John.

Land. I say what woman?

Ant. I say so too.

Land. I say again, I will know.

Ant. I say 'tis fit you should.

Land. And I tell thee he has a woman here.

Ant. I tell thee 'tis then the better for him.

Land. Was ever gentlewoman
So frumpt up with a fool? Well, saucy sirrah,
I will know who it is, and to what purpose.
I pay the rent, and I will know how my house
Comes by these inflammations. If this geer hold,
Best hang a sign-post up, to tell the signiors,
Here you may have lewdness at livery.

Enter FREDERICK.

Ant. 'Twould be a great ease to your age.

Fred. How now?
What's the matter, landlady?

Land. What's the matter!
Ye use me decently among ye, gentlemen.

Fred. Who has abused her? You, sir?

Land. Odd's my witness,
I will not be thus treated, that I will not.

Ant. I gave her no ill language.

Land. Thou liest lewdly;
Thou took'st me up at every word I spoke,
As I had been a maukin, a flirt gillian:
And thou think'st, because thou canst write and read,
Our noses must be under thee.

Fred. Dare you so, sirrah?

Ant. Let but the truth be known, sir, I beseech ye—
She raves of wenches, and I know not what, sir.

Land. Go to, thou know'st too well, thou wicked varlet,
Thou instrument of evil.

Ant. As I live, sir, she's ever thus till dinner.

Fred. Get ye in, I'll answer ye anon, sir.
[*Exit* ANT.
Now your grief, what is't? for I can guess——

Land. Ye may, with shame enough,
If there was shame amongst you—nothing thought on,
But how ye may abuse my house: not satisfied
With bringing home your bastards to undo me,
But you must drill your whores here too; my patience,
Because I bear, and bear, and carry all,
And as they say, am willing to groan under,
Must be your make-sport now.

Fred. No more of these words,
Nor no more murmurings, lady: for you know
That I know something. I did suspect your anger,
But turn it presently and handsomely,
And bear yourself discreetly to this woman,
For such a one there is indeed.

Land. 'Tis well, sir.

Fred. Leave off your devil's matins, and your melancholies,
Or we shall leave our lodgings.

Land. You have much need
To use the vagrant ways, and to much profit:
Ye had that might content,
(At home within yourselves too) right good, gentlemen,
Wholesome, and ye said handsome. But you, gallants,
Beast that I was to believe ye——

Fred. Leave your suspicion;
For as I live there's no such thing.

Land. Mine honour;
And 'twere not for mine honour——

Fred. Come, your honour,
Your house, and you too, if you dare believe me,
Are well enough: sleek up yourself, leave crying,
For I must have ye entertain this lady
With all civility; she well deserves it,
Together with all service: I dare trust ye,
For I have found ye faithful. When you know her,
You will find your own fault: no more words, but do it.

Land. You know you may command me.

Enter Don JOHN.

John. Worshipful lady,
How does thy velvet scabbard? By this hand,
Thou look'st most amiably. Now could I willingly
(And 'twere not for abusing thy Geneva print there)
Venture my body with thee——

Land. You'll leave this roguery
When ye come to my years.

John. By this light,
Thou art not above fifteen yet; a mere girl,
Thou hast not half thy teeth——

Fred. Pr'ythee, John,

Let her alone, she has been vexed already:
She'll grow stark mad, man.
John. I would fain see her mad.
An old mad woman—
Fred. Fy'tyhee, be patient.
John. Is like a miller's mare troubled with toothache;
She makes the rarest faces——
Fred. Go, and do it,
And do not mind this fellow,
[*Exit Landlady, and comes back again presently.*
John. What, again?
Nay, then it is decreed; though hills were set on hills,
And seas met seas, to guard thee, I would through.
Land. Odd's my witness, if you ruffle me, I'll spoil your sweet face for you, that I will. Go, go to the door, there's a gentleman there would speak with ye.
John. Upon my life, Petruchio. Good, dear landlady, carry him into the dining-room, and I'll wait upon him presently.
Land. Well, Don John, the time will come that I shall be even with you. [*Exit.*
John. I must be gone; yet if my project hold,
You shall not stay behind: I'll rather trust
A cat with sweet milk, Frederick. By her face,

Enter 1st CONSTANTIA.

I feel her fears are working.
Con. Is there no way,
I do beseech ye, think yet, to divert
This certain danger?
Fred. 'Tis impossible:
Their honours are engaged.
Con. Then there must be murder,
Which, gentlemen, I shall no sooner hear of,
Than make one in't. You may, if you please, sir,
Make all go less.
John. Lady, wer't my own cause,
I could dispense; but loaden with my friend's trust,
I must go on, though general massacres,
As much I fear——
Con. Do you hear, sir? for Heaven's sake,
Let me request one favour of you.
Fred. Yes, any thing.
Con. The gentleman I find is too resolute,
Too hot and fiery for the cause: as ever
You did a virtuous deed, for honour's sake,
Go with him, and allay him: your fair temper,
A noble disposition, like wished showers,
May quench those eating fires, that would spoil all else.
I see in him destruction.
Fred. I will do it:
And 'tis a wise consideration,
To me a bounteous favour. Hark ye, John,
I will go with ye.
John. No.
Fred. Indeed I will——
Ye go upon a hazard—no denial—
For as I live I'll go.
John. Then make ye ready,
For I am straight on horseback.
Fred. My sword on, and
I am as ready as you. What my best behaviour,
With all the art I have can work upon 'em,
Be sure of, and expect a fair end: the old gentlewoman
Shall wait upon ye; she is discreet and secret,
Ye may trust her in all points.
Con. Ye are noble;
And so I take my leave.
John. I hope, lady, a happy issue for all this.
Con. All Heaven's care upon ye, and my prayers.
John. So,
Now my mind's at rest.
Fred. Away, 'tis late, John. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ANTONIO, *Surgeon, and a Gentleman.*

Gent. What symptoms do ye find in him?
Sur. None, sir, dangerous, if he'd be ruled.
Gent. Why, what does he do?
Sur. Nothing that he should. First, he will let no liquor down but wine; and then he has a fancy that he must be dressed always to the tune of John Dory.
Gent. How, to the tune of John Dory?
Sur. Why, he will have fiddlers, and make them play and sing it to him all the while.
Gent. An odd fancy indeed.
Ant. Give me some wine.
Sur. I told ye so——'Tis death, sir.
Ant. 'Tis a horse, sir. Dost thou think I shall recover with the help of barley-water only?
Gent. Fie, Antonio, you must be governed.
Ant. Why, sir, he feeds me with nothing but rotten roots and drowned chickens, stewed *pericraniums* and *pia-maters*; and when I go to bed (by Heaven 'tis true, sir) he rolls me up in lints, with labels at 'em, that I am just the man i' th' almanack, my head and face is in Aries' place.
Sur. Will it please ye, to let your friends see you opened?
Ant. Will it please you, sir, to give me a brimmer? I feel my body open enough for that. Give it me, or I'll die upon thy hand, and spoil thy custom.
Sur. How, a brimmer?
Ant. Why look ye, sir! thus I am used still; I can get nothing that I want. In how long time canst thou cure me?
Sur. In forty days.
Ant. I'll have a dog shall lick me whole in twenty. In how long canst thou kill me?
Sur. Presently.
Ant. Do it: that's the shorter, and there's more delight in it.
Gent. You must have patience.
Ant. Man, I must have business—this foolish fellow hinders himself—I have a dozen rascals to hurt within these five days. Good man-mender, stop me up with parsley, like stuffed beef, and let me walk abroad.
Sur. You shall walk shortly.
Ant. I will walk presently, sir, and leave your sallads there, your green salves, and your oils; I'll to my old diet again, strong food, and rich wine, and try what that will do.

Sur. Well, go thy ways, thou art the maddest old fellow I ever met with. [*Exeunt.*

Enter 1*st* CONSTANTIA *and Landlady.*

Con. I have told you all I can, and more than yet
Those gentlemen know of me. But are they
Such strange creatures, say you?
Land. There's the younger,
Don Juan, the errant'st jack in all this city:
The other time has blasted, yet he will stoop,
If not o'erflown, and freely, on the quarry—
Has been a dragon in his days. But, Tarmont,
Don Jenkin, is the devil himself—the dog-days—
The most incomprehensible whore-master—
Twenty a-night is nothing: the truth is,
Whose chastity he chops upon he cares not,
He flies at all—bastards, upon my conscience,
He has now in making multitudes—The last night
He brought home one; I pity her that bore it,
But we are all weak vessels. Some rich woman
(For wise I dare not call her) was the mother,
For it was hung with jewels; the bearing-cloth
No less than crimson velvet.
Con. How!
Land. 'Tis true, lady.
Con. Was it a boy too?
Land. A brave boy; deliberation,
And judgment shew'd in's getting, as I'll say for him.
He's as well plac'd for that sport——
Con. May I see it?
For there is a neighbour of mine, a gentlewoman,
Has had a late mischance, which willingly
I would know further of; now if you please
To be so courteous to me—
Land. Ye shall see it.
But what do you think of these men, now ye know 'em?
Be wise,
Ye may repent too late else; I but tell ye
For your own good, and as ye will find it.
Con. I am advis'd.
Land. No more words then; do that,
And instantly, I told ye of: be ready.
Don John, I'll fit ye for your frumps.
Con. It shall be.
But shall I see this child?
Land. Within this half hour.
Let's in, and think better. [*Exeunt.*

Enter PETRUCHIO, *Don* JOHN, *and* FREDERICK.

John. Sir, he is worth your knowledge, and a gentleman
(If I that so much love him may commend him)
That's full of honour; and one, if foul play
Should fall upon us (for which fear I brought him),
Will not fly back for filips.
Petr. Ye much honour me.
And once more I pronounce ye both mine.
Fred. Stay, what troop
Is that below i' th' valley there?
John. Hawking, I take it.
Petr. They are so; 'tis the duke, 'tis even he, gentlemen.
Sirrah, draw back the horses till we call ye.
I know him by his company.
Fred. I think too,
He bends up this way.
Petr. So he does.
John. Stand you still,
Within this covert, till I call. He comes forward;
Here will I wait him. To your places.
Petr. I need no more instruct ye.
John. Fear me not. [*Exeunt* PETR. *and* FRED.

Enter Duke and his Faction.

Duke. Feed the hawks up,
We'll fly no more to-day.—O my blest fortune,
Have I so fairly met the man?
John. Ye have, sir,
And him ye know by this.
Duke. Sir, all the honour,
And love——
John. I do beseech your grace stay there.
Dismiss your train a little.
Duke. Walk aside,
And out of hearing, I command ye.
Now, sir, be plain.
John. I will, and short.
Ye have wrong'd a gentleman beyond all justice,
Beyond the mediation of all friends.
Duke. The man, and manner of wrong?
John. Petruchio;
The wrong, ye have dishonoured his sister.
Duke. Now stay you, sir,
And hear me a little. This gentleman's
Sister that you nam'd, 'tis true, I have long lov'd;
As true, I have enjoy'd her: no less truth,
I have a child by her. But that she, or he,
Or any of that family are tainted,
Suffer disgrace, or ruin, by my pleasures,
I wear a sword to satisfy the world, no,
And him in this cause when he pleases; for know, sir,
She is my wife, contracted before Heaven,
(A witness I owe more tie to than her brother;)
Nor will I fly from that name, which long since
Had had the church's approbation,
But for his jealous nature.
John. Your pardon, sir, I am fully satisfied.
Duke. Dear sir, I knew I should convert ye.
Had we but that rough man here now to——
John. And ye shall, sir.
What, hoa, hoa!
Duke. I hope you have laid no ambush

Enter PETRUCHIO.

John. Only friends.
Duke. My noble brother, welcome
Come, put your anger off, we'll have o fighting
Unless you will maintain I am unworthy
To bear that name.
Petr. Do you speak this heartily?
Duke. Upon my soul, and truly; the first priest
Shall put ye out of these doubts.
Petr. Now I love ye,

And I beseech ye, pardon my suspicions;
You are now more than a brother, a brave friend too.
John. The good man's over-joy'd.

Enter FREDERICK.

Fred. How now goes it?
John. Why, the man has his mare again, and all's well.
The duke professes freely he's her husband.
Fred. 'Tis a good hearing.
John. Yes, for modest gentlemen. I must present ye.
May it please your grace,
To number this brave gentleman, my friend,
And noble kinsman, among the rest of your servants.
Duke. O, my brave friend, you shower your bounties on me.
Amongst my best thoughts, signior, in which number
You being worthily disposed already,
May freely place your friend.
Fred. Your grace does me a great deal of honour.
Petr. Why this is wond'rous happy. But, now, brother,
Now comes the bitter to our sweet——Constantia——
Duke. Why, what of her?
Petr. Nor what, nor where, do I know.
Wing'd with her fears, last night, beyond my knowledge,
She quit my house, but whither——
Fred. Let not that——
Duke. No more, good sir, I have heard too much.
Petr. Nay, sink not,
She cannot be so lost.
John. Nor shall not, gentlemen:
Be free again, the lady's found. That smile, sir,
Shews you distrust your servant.
Duke. I do beseech ye——
John. Ye shall believe me; by my soul she's safe.
Duke. Heaven knows I would believe, sir.
Fred. Ye may safely.
John. And under noble usage. This gentleman
Met her in all her doubts last night, and to his guard
(Her fears being strong upon her) she gave her person,
Who waited on her to her lodging; where all respect,
Civil and honest service, now attend her.
Petr. Ye may believe now.
Duke. Yes, I do, and strongly.
Well, my good friends, or rather my good angels,
For ye have both preserv'd me; when these virtues
Die in your friend's remembrance——
John. Good your grace,
Lose no more time in compliments, 'tis too precious;
I know it by myself, there can be no hell
To his that hangs upon his hopes.
Petr. He has hit it.
Fred. To horse again then, for this night I'll crown
With all the joys ye wish for.
Petr. Happy gentlemen! [*Exeunt.*

Enter FRANCISCO *and a Man.*

Fran. This is the maddest mischief—never fool was so fobb'd off as I am—made ridiculous and to myself, to my own ass——trust a woman! I'll trust the devil first, for he dares be better than his word sometimes. Pray tell me, in what observance have I ever fail'd her!
Man. Nay, you can tell that best yourself.
Fran. Let me consider——

Enter Don FREDERICK *and* JOHN.

Fred. Let them talk, we'll go on before.
Fran. Where didst thou meet Constantia and this woman?
Fred. Constantia! What are these fellows? Stay by all means.
Man. Why, sir, I met her in the great street that comes from the market-place, just at the turning, by a goldsmith's shop.
Fred. Stand still, John.
Fran. Well, Constantia has spun herself a fair thread now: what will her best friends think of this?
Fred. John, I smell some juggling, John.
John. Yes, Frederick, I fear it will be proved so.
Fran. But what should the reason be, dost think, of this so sudden change in her?
Fred. 'Tis she.
Man. Why, truly, I suspect she has been intic'd to it by a stranger.
John. Did you mark that, Frederick?
Fran. Stranger! who?
Man. A young gentleman that's newly come to town.
Fred. Mark that too.
John. Yes, sir.
Fran. Why do you think so?
Man. I heard her grave conductress twattle something as they went along, that makes me guess it.
John. 'Tis she, Frederick.
Fred. But who that he is, John?
Fran. I do not doubt to bolt them out, for they must certainly be about the town. Ha! no more words. Come, let's be gone.
[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO *and Man.*
Fred. Well.
John. Very well.
Fred. Discreetly.
John. Finely carried.
Fred. Ye have no more of these tricks?
John. Ten to one, sir, I shall meet with them if ye have.
Fred. Is this fair?
John. Was it in you a friend's part to deal double? I am no ass, Don Frederick.

Fred. And, Don John, it shall appear I am no fool: disgrace me to make yourself thus every woman's courtsey; 'tis boyish, 'tis base.

John. 'Tis false; I privy to this dog-trick! Clear yourself, for I know well enough where the wind sits; or as I have a life—

[*Trampling within.*

Fred. No more; they are coming; shew no discontent, let's quietly away. If she be at home, our jealousies are over; if not, you and I must have a farther parley, John.

John. Yes, Don Frederick, ye may be sure we shall. But where are these fellows? Pox on't, we have lost them too in our spleens, like fools.

Enter Duke and PETRUCHIO.

Duke. Come, gentlemen, let's go a little faster;
Suppose you have all mistresses, and mend
Your pace accordingly.

John. Sir, I should be as glad of a mistress as another man.

Fred. Yes, o' my conscience wouldst thou, and of any other man's mistress too, that I'll answer for. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ANTONIO *and his Man.*

Ant. With all my gold?

Man. The trunk broke open, and all gone.

Ant. And the mother in the plot?

Man. And the mother and all.

Ant. And the devil and all: the mighty pox go with them! Belike they thought I was no more of this world, and those trifles would not disturb my conscience.

Man. Sure they thought, sir, you would not live to disturb them.

Ant. Well, my sweet mistress, I'll try how handsomely your ladyship can hang upon a pair of gallows: there's your master-piece. No imagination where they should be?

Man. None, sir; yet we have searched all places we suspected; I believe they have taken towards the port.

Ant. Get me then a water-conjuror, one that can raise water-devils. I'll port them! play at duck and drake with my money! Get me a conjuror, I say, inquire out a man that lets out devils.

Man. I don't know where.

Ant. In every street, Tom Fool; any bleareyed people with red heads and flat noses can perform it. Thou shalt know them by their half-gowns and no breeches. Find me out a conjuror, I say, and learn his price, how he will let his devils out by the day. I'll have them again if they be above ground. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Duke, PETRUCHIO, FREDERICK *and Don* JOHN.

Petr. Your grace is welcome now to Naples, so ye are all, gentlemen.

John. Don Frederick, will you step in, and give the lady notice who comes to visit her?

Petr. Bid her make haste; we come to see no curious wench, a night gown will serve our turn. Here's one that knows her nearer.

Fred. I'll tell her what you say, sir. [*Exit.*

Petr. Now will the sport be, to observe her alterations, how betwixt fear and joy she will behave herself.

Duke. Dear brother, I must intreat you—

Petr. I conceive your mind, sir—I will not chide her.

Enter FREDERICK *and* PETER.

John. How now?

Fred. You may, sir; not to abuse your patience longer, nor hold ye off with tedious circumstances; for ye must know—

Petr. What?

Duke. Where is she?

Fred. Gone, sir.

Duke. How!

Petr. What did you say, sir?

Fred. Gone; by heaven, removed. The woman of the house too.

Petr. What, that reverend old woman that tired me with compliments?

Fred. The very same.

John. Well, Don Frederick.

Fred. Don John, it is not well—But——

Petr. Gone!

Fred. This fellow can satisfy I lie not.

Pet. A little after my master was departed, sir, with this gentleman, my fellow and myself being sent on business, as we must think on purpose—

Petr. Hang these circumstances, they always serve to usher in ill ends.

John. Now I could eat that rogue, I am so angry.
Gone!

Petr. Gone!

Fred. Directly gone, fled, shifted; what would you have me say?

Duke. Well, gentlemen, wrong not my good opinion.

Fred. For your dukedom, sir, I would not be a knave.

John. He that is, a rot run in his blood!

Petr. But, hark ye, gentlemen, are you sure you had her here? Did you not dream this?

John. Have you your nose, sir?

Petr. Yes, sir.

John. Then we had her.

Petr. Since ye are so short, believe your having her shall suffer more construction.

John. Well, sir, let it suffer.

Fred. How to convince ye, sir, I can't imagine; but my life shall justify my innocence, or fall with it.

Duke. Thus then——for we may be all abused.

Petr. 'Tis possible.

Duke. Here let's part until to-morrow this time; we to our way to clear this doubt, and you to yours: pawning our honours then to meet again; when if she be not found—

Fred. We stand engag'd to answer any worthy way we are call'd to.

Duke. We ask no more.

Petr. To-morrow certain.
John. If we out-live this night, sir.
[*Exeunt* DUKE *and* PETRUCHIO.
Fred. Come, Don John, we have somewhat now to do.
John. I am sure I would have.
Fred. If she be not found, we must fight.
John. I am glad on't, I have not fought a great while.
Fred. If we die—
John. There's so much money saved in letchery. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter 2*d* CONSTANTIA, *and her Mother.*

Moth. Hold, Cons, hold, for goodness hold, I am in that desertion of spirit for want of breath, that I am almost reduced to the necessity of not being able to defend myself against the inconvenience of a fall.

2*d Con.* Dear mother, let us go a little faster to secure ourselves from Antonio: for my part I am in that terrible fright, that I can neither think, speak, nor stand still, till we are safe a ship-board, and out of sight of the shore.

Moth. Out of sight o' the shore! why, d'ye think I'll depatriate?

2*d Con.* Depatriate! what's that?

Moth. Why, ye fool you, leave my country: what, will you never learn to speak out of the vulgar road?

2*d Con.* O Lord, this hard word will undo us.

Moth. As I am a Christian, if it were to save my honour (which is ten thousand times dearer to me than my life) I would not be guilty of so odious a thought.

2*d Con.* Pray, mother, since your honour is so dear to you, consider that if we are taken, both it and we are lost for ever.

Moth. Ay, girl; but what will the world say, if they should hear so odious a thing of us, as that we should depatriate?

2*d Con.* Ay, there's it; the world! why, mother, the world does not care a pin, if both you and I were hang'd; and that we shall be certainly, if Antonio takes us, for running away with his gold.

Moth. Protest I care not, I'll ne'er depart from the demarches of a person of quality; and let come what will, I shall rather choose to submit myself to my fate, than strive to prevent by any deportment that is not congruous in every degree, to the steps and measures of a strict practitioner of honour.

2*d Con.* Would not this make one stark mad? Her style is not more out of the way, than her manner of reasoning; she first sells me to an ugly old fellow, then she runs away with me and all his gold, and now, like a strict practitioner of honour, resolves to be taken, rather than depatriate, as she calls it. [*Aside.*

Moth. As I am a Christian, Cons, here's a tavern, and a very decent sight! I'll in, I am resolv'd, though by it I should run a risco of never so stupendous a nature.

2*d Con.* There's no stopping her. What shall I do?

Moth. I'll send for my kinswoman and some music to revive me a little: for really, Cons, I am reduced to that sad imbecility by the injury I have done my poor feet, that I'm in a great incertitude, whether they will have liveliness sufficient to support me up to the top of the stairs or no. [*Exit.*

2*d Con.* This sinning without pleasure I cannot endure: to have always remorse, and ne'er do any thing that should cause it, is intolerable. If I lov'd money too, which I think I don't, my mother she has all that: I have nothing to comfort myself with, but Antonio's stiff beard; and that alone, for a woman of my years, is but a sorry kind of entertainment. I wonder why these old fumbling fellows should trouble themselves so much, only to trouble us more. They can do nothing, but put us in mind of our graves. Well, I'll no more on't; for to be frighted with death and damnation both at once is a little too hard. I do here vow I'll live for ever chaste, or find out some handsome young fellow I can love; I think that's the better.

[*Mother looks out at the window.*

Moth. Come up, Cons, the fiddles are here.

2*d Con.* I come——

[*Mother goes from the window.*

I must be gone, though whither I cannot tell. These fiddles, and her discreet companions, will quickly make an end of all she has stolen; and then five hundred new pieces sell me to another old fellow. She has taken care not to leave me a farthing: yet I am so better than under her conduct: 'twill be at worst but begging for my life.

And starving were to me an easier fate,
Than to be forc'd to live with one I hate.
[*Goes up to her mother.*

Enter Don JOHN.

John. It will not out of my head, but that Don Frederick has sent away this wench, for all he carries it so gravely; yet methinks he should be honester than so: but these grave men are never touch'd upon such occasions. Mark it when you will, and you'll find a grave man, especially if he pretend to be a precise man, will do ye forty things without remorse, that would startle one

of us mad fellows to think of. Because they are familiar with Heaven in their prayers, they think they may be bold with it in any thing: now we that are not so well acquainted, bear greater reverence. [*Music plays above.*

What's here, music and women? Wou'd I had one of 'em!

[*One of 'em looks out at the window.*

That's a whore; I know it by her smile. O' my conscience, take a woman masked and hooded, nay cover'd all o'er, so that you cannot see one bit of her, and at twelvescore yards distance, if she be a whore, as ten to one she is, I shall know it certainly; I have an instinct within me ne'er fails. [*Another looks out.*

Ah, rogue! she's right too, I'm sure on't.

Moth. above. Come, come, let's dance in t'other room, 'tis a great deal better.

John. Say you so! what now if I should go up and dance too? It is a tavern; pox o' this business: I'll in, I am resolv'd, and try my own fortune; 'tis hard luck if I don't get one of 'em.

As he goes to the door, 2*d* CONSTANTIA *enters.*

See here's one bolted already. Fair lady, whither so fast?

2*d Con.* I don't know, sir.

John. May I have the honour to wait upon you?

2*d Con.* Yes, if you please, sir.

John. Whither?

2*d Con.* I tell you I don't know.

John. She's very quick. Would I might be so happy as to know you, lady.

2*d Con.* I dare not let you see my face, sir.

John. Why?

2*d. Con.* For fear you should not like it, and then leave me; for, to tell ye true, I have at this present very great need of you.

John. If thou hast half so much need of me as I have of thee, lady, I'll be content to be hang'd though.

2*d Con.* It's a proper handsome fellow this; if he'd but love me now, I would never seek out further. Sir, I am young, and unexperienced in the world.

John. Nay, if thou art young, it's no great matter what thy face is.

2*d Con.* Perhaps this freedom in me may seem strange; but, sir, in short, I'm forc'd to fly from one I hate; if I should meet him, will you here promise he shall not take me from you.

John. Yes, that I will before I see your face, your shape has charmed me enough for that already; if any one takes ye from me, lady, I'll give him leave to take from me too—(I was going to name 'em) certain things of mine, that I would not lose, now I have you in my power, for all the geese in Christendom.

2*d Con.* For heaven's sake, then conduct me to some place, where I may be secured awhile from the sight of any one whatsoever.

John. By all the hopes I have to find thy face as lovely as thy shape, I will.

2*d Con.* Well, sir, I believe ye; for you have an honest look.

John. 'Slid! I am afraid Don Frederick has been giving her a character of me too. Come, pray unmask.

2*d Con.* Then turn away your face; for I'm resolv'd you shall not see a bit of mine till I have set it in order; and then——

John. What?

2*d Con.* I'll strike you dead.

John. A mettled whore, I warrant her: come, if she be now young, and have but a nose on her face, she'll be as good as her word. I'm e'en panting for breath already.

2*d Con.* Now stand your ground if you dare.

John. By this light a rare creature! ten thousand times handsomer than her we seek for! This can be sure no common one: pray Heaven she be a whore.

2*d Con.* Well, sir, what say you now?

John. Nothing; I'm so amazed I am not able to speak. I'd best fall to presently, though it be in the street, for fear of losing time. Pr'ythee, my dear sweet creature, go with me into that corner, that thou and I may talk a little in private.

2*d Con.* No, sir, no private dealing, I beseech you.

John. 'Sheart, what shall I do? I'm out of my wits for her. Hark ye, my dear soul, cuns thou love me?

2*d Con.* If I could, what then?

John. Why you know what then, and then should I be the happiest man alive.

2*d Con.* Ay, so you all say, till you have your desires, and then you leave us.

John. But, my dear heart, I am not made like other men: I never can love heartily till I have——

2*d Con.* Got their maidenheads; but suppose now I should be no maid?

John. Pr'ythee suppose me nothing, but let me try.

2*d Con.* Nay, good sir, hold.

John. No maid! Why, so much the better, thou art then the more experienced; for my part, I hate a bungler at any thing.

2*d Con.* O dear, I like this fellow strangely. Hark ye, sir, I am not worth a groat, but though you should not be so neither, if you'll but love me, I'll follow ye all the world over: I'll work for ye, beg for ye, do any thing for ye, so you'll promise to do nothing with any body else.

John. O heavens, I'm in another world! this wench sure was made on purpose for me, she is so just of my humour. My dear, 'tis impossible for me to say how much I will do for thee, or with thee, thou sweet bewitching woman; but let's make haste home, or I shall ne'er be able to hold out till I come thither. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FREDERICK *and* FRANCISCO.

Fred. And art thou sure it was Constantia, say'st thou, that he was leading?

Fran. Am I sure I live, sir? Why, I dwelt in the house with her; how can I choose but know her?

Fred. But didst thou see her face?

Fran. Lord, sir, I saw her face as plainly as I see your's just now, not two streets off.

Fred. Yes, 'tis even so: I suspected it at first, but then he forswore it with that confidence—Well, Don John, if these be your practices, you shall have no more a friend of me, sir, I assure you. Perhaps though he met her by chance, and intends to carry her to her brother, and the Duke.

Enter Don JOHN *and 2d* CONSTANTIA.

A little time will shew—God-so, here he is;—— I'll step behind this shop, and observe what he says.

John. Here now go in, and make me for ever happy.

Fred. Dear Don John!

John. A pox o' your kindness! How the devil comes he here just at this time? Now will he ask me forty foolish questions, and I have such a mind to this wench, that I cannot think of one excuse for my life.

Fred. Your servant, sir: pray who's that you locked in just now at the door?

John. Why a friend of mine, that's gone up to read a book.

Fred. A book! that's a quaint one, i'faith: pr'ythee, Don John, what library hast thou been buying this afternoon? for i' the morning, to my knowledge, thou hadst never a book there, except it were an almanack, and that was none of thy own neither.

John. No, no, it's a book of his own, he brought along with him: a scholar, that's given to reading.

Fred. And do scholars, Don John, wear petticoats now-a-days?

John. Plague on him, he has seen her—Well, Don Frederick, thou knowest I am not good at lying; 'tis a woman, I confess it, make your best on't: what then?

Fred. Why then, Don John, I desire you'll be pleased to let me see her.

John. Why faith, Frederick, I should not be against the thing, but you know a man must keep his word, and she has a mind to be private.

Fred. But, John, you may remember when I met a lady so before, that very self-same lady too, that I got leave for you to see her, John.

John. Why, do you think then that this here is Constantia?

Fred. I cannot properly say I think it, John, because I know it; this fellow here saw her as you led her i' th' streets.

John. Well, and what then? who does he say it is?

Fred. Ask him, sir, and he'll tell ye.

John. Sweet-heart, dost thou know this lady?

Fran. I think I should, sir; I have lived long enough in the house to know her, sure.

John. And how do they call her, pr'ythee?

Fran. Constantia.

John. How! Constantia?

Fran. Yes, sir, the woman's name is Constantia, that's flat.

John. Is it so, sir? and so is this too. [*Strikes him.*

Fran. Oh, oh! [*Runs out.*

John. Now, sirrah, you may safely say you have not borne false witness for nothing.

Fred. Fie, Don John, why do you beat the poor fellow for doing his duty, and telling truth?

John. Telling truth? thou talk'st as if thou hadst been hir'd to bear false witness too: you are a very fine gentleman.

Fred. What a strange confidence he has! but is there no shame in thee? nor any consideration of what is just or honest, to keep a woman thus against her will, that thou knowest is in love with another man too? Dost think a judgment will not follow this?

John. Good, dear Frederick, do thou keep thy sentences and thy morals for some better opportunity; this here is not a fit subject for them; I tell thee, she is no more Constantia than thou art.

Fred. Why won't you let me see her then?

John. Because I can't: besides, she's not for thy turn.

Fred. How so?

John. Why, thy genius lies another way, thou art for flames and darts, and those fine things; now I am for the old, plain, downright way; I am not so curious, Frederick, as thou art.

Fred. Very well, sir; but is this worthy in you to endeavour to debauch——

John. But is there no shame? but is this worthy? What a many buts are here! If I should tell thee now solemnly thou hast but one eye, and give thee reasons for it, wouldst thou believe me?

Fred. I think hardly, sir, against my own knowledge.

John. Then why dost thou, with that grave face, go about to persuade me against mine? You should do as you would be done by, Frederick.

Fred. And so I will, sir, in this very particular, since there's no other remedy; I shall do that for the Duke and Petruchio, which I should expect from them upon the like occasion: in short, to let you see I am as sensible of my honour, as you can be careless of yours, I must tell ye, sir, that I am resolved to wait upon this lady to them.

John. Are ye so, sir? Why, I must then, sweet sir, tell you again, I am resolved you sha'nt. Ne'er stare nor wonder, I have promised to preserve her from the sight of any one whatsoever, and with the hazard of my life will make it good: but that you may not think I mean an injury to Petruchio, or the Duke, know, Don Frederick, that tho' I love a wench perhaps a little better, I hate to do a thing that's base as much as you do. Once more, upon my honour, this is not Constantia; let that satisfy you.

Fred. All that will not do— [*Goes to the door.*

John. No! why then this shall. [*Draws.*] Come not one step nearer, for if thou dost, by Heaven, it is thy last.

Fred. This is an insolence beyond the temper of a man to suffer—Thus I throw off thy friendship, and since thy folly has provoked my patience beyond its natural bounds, know it is not in thy power now to save thyself.

John. That's to be tried, sir, tho' by your favour, [*Looks up to the windows.*] Mistress what you call-'em—pr'ythee look out now a little, and see how I'll fight for thee.

Fred. Come, sir, are you ready?

John. O lord, sir, your servant. [*Fight.*

Enter Duke and PETRUCHIO.

Petr. What's here, fighting? Let's part 'em. *How*! Don Frederick against Don John! How came you to fall out, gentlemen? What's the cause?

Fred. Why, sir, it is your quarrel, and not mine, that drew this on me: I saw him lock Constantia up into that house, and I desired to wait upon her to you; that's the cause.

Duke. O, it may be he designed to lay the obligation upon us himself, sir. We are beholden to you for this favour beyond all possibility of——

John. Pray, sir, do not throw away your thanks before you know whether I have deserved them or no.—Oh, is that your design? Sir, you must not go in there. [PETR. *going to the door.*

Petr. How, sir, not go in?

John. No, sir, most certainly not go in.

Petr. She's my sister, and I will speak with her.

John. If she were your mother, sir, you should not, tho' it were but to ask her blessing.

Petr. Since you are so positive, I'll try.

John. You shall find me a man of my word, sir. [*Fight.*

Duke. Nay, pray gentlemen, hold, let me compose this matter. Why do you make a scruple of letting us see Constantia?

John. Why, sir, 'twould turn a man's head round to hear these fellows talk so; there is not one word true of all that he has said.

Duke. Then you do not know where Constantia is?

John. Not I, by heavens.

Fred. O monstrous impudence! Upon my life, sir, I saw him shut her up into that house, and know his temper so, that if I had not stopped him, I dare swear by this time he would have ravished her.

John. Now that is two lies; for first, he did not see her; and next, the lady I let in, is not to be ravished, she is so willing.

Duke. But look ye, sir, this doubt may easily be cleared; let either Petruchio or I but see her, and if she be not Constantia, we engage our honours (tho' we should know her) never to discover who she is.

John. Ay, but there's the point now that I can never consent to.

Duke. Why?

John. Because I gave her my word to the contrary.

Duke. And did you never break your word with a woman?

John. Never before I lay with her; and that's the case now.

Petr. Pish, I won't be kept off thus any longer: sir, either let me enter, or I'll force my way.

Fred. No, pray sir, let that be my office: I will be revenged on him for having betrayed me to his friendship.

[PET. *and* FRED. *offer to fight with* JOHN.

Duke. Nay, ye shall not offer him foul play neither. Hold, brother, pray a word; and with you too, sir.

John. Pox on't, would they would make an end of this business, that I might be with her again! Hark ye, gentlemen, I'll make ye a fair proposition; leave off this ceremony among yourselves, and those dismal threats against me; filip up cross or pile who shall begin first, and I'll do the best I can to entertain you all one after another.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Now do my fingers itch to be about somebody's ears for the loss of my gold. Ha! what's here to do, swords drawn? I must make one, tho' it cost me the singing of ten John Dorio's more. Courage, brave boy, I'll stand by thee as long as this tool here lasts: and it was once a good one.

Petr. Who's this? Antonio! O, sir, you are welcome, you shall be even judge between us.

Ant. No, no, no, not I, sir, I thank ye; I'll make work for others to judge of, I'm resolved to fight.

Petr. But we won't fight with you.

Ant. Then put up your swords, or by this I'll lay about me.

John. Well said, old Bilboa, i'faith.

[*They put up their swords.*

Petr. Pray hear us, tho': this gentleman saw him lock up my sister into that house, and he refuses to let us see her.

Ant. How, friend, is this true?

John. Nay, good sir, let not our friendship be broken before it is well made. Look ye, gentlemen, to shew ye that you are all mistaken, and that my formal friend there is an ass——

Fred. I thank you, sir,

John. I'll give you my consent that this gentleman here shall see her, if his information can satisfy you.

Duke. Yes, yes; he knows her very well.

John. Then, sir, go in here, if you please: I dare trust him with her, for he is too old to do her either good or harm.

Fred. I wonder how my gentleman will get off from all this.

John. I shall be even with you, sir, another time, for all your grinning.

Enter a Servant.

How now? Where is he?

Ser. He's run out of the back-door, sir.

John. How so?

Ser. Why, sir, he's run after the gentlewoman you brought in.

John. 'Sdeath, how durst you let her out?

Ser. Why, sir, I knew nothing.

John. No, thou ignorant rascal, and therefore I'll beat something into thee. [*Beats him.*

Fred. What, you won't kill him?

John. Nay, come not near me, for if thou dost, by heavens, I'll give thee as much; and would do so, however, but that I won't lose time from looking after my dear sweet——a pox confound you all!

[*Goes in and shuts the door after him.*

Duke. What, he has shut the door!

Fred. It's no matter, I'll lead you to a private back way, by that corner, where we shall meet him. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter ANTONIO'S *Servant, Constable and Officers.*

Ser. A young woman say'st thou, and her mother?

Man. Yes, just now come to the house; not an hour ago.

Ser. It must be they: here, friend, here's money for you; be sure you take 'em, and I'll reward you better when you have done.

Const. But, neighbour, ho—hup—shall I now—hup—know these parties? for I would—hup—execute my office—hup—like—hup—a sober person.

Man. That's hard; but you may easily know the mother, for she is—hup—drunk.

Const. Nay——hup——if she be drunk, let—hup——hup——me alone to maul her; for——hup——I abhor a drunkard——hup——let it be man, woman, or——hup——child.

Man. Ay, neighbour, one may see you hate drinking, indeed.

Const. Why, neighbour——hup——did you ever see me drunk? Answer me that question: did you ever——hup——see me drunk?

Man. No, never, never; come away, here's the house. [*Exeunt.*

Enter 1*st* CONSTANTIA.

Con. Oh, whither shall I run to hide myself! the constable has seized the landlady, and I am afraid, the poor child too. How to return to Don Frederick's house I know not; and if I knew, I durst not, after those things the landlady has told me of him. If I get not from this drunken rabble, I expose my honour; and if I fall into my brother's hands, I lose my life. You powers above, look down and help me! I am faulty, I confess, but greater faults have often met with lighter punishments.

Then let not heavier yet on me be laid;
Be what I will, I'm still what you have made.

Enter Don JOHN.

John. I'm almost dead with running, and will be so quite, but I will overtake her.

Con. Hold, Don John, hold.

John. Who's that? ha! is it you, my dear?

Con. For heaven's sake, sir, carry me from hence, or I'm utterly undone.

John. Phoo, pox, this is the other; now could I almost beat her, for but making me the proposition. Madam, there are some coming, that will do it a great deal better; but I am in such haste, that I vow to gad, madam——

Con. Nay, pray, sir, stay, you are concerned in this as well as I; for your woman is taken.

John. Ha! my woman? [*Goes back to her.* I vow to gad, madam, I do so highly honour your ladyship, that I would venture my life a thousand times to do you service. But, pray, where is she?

Con. Why, sir, she is taken by the constable.

John. Constable! which way went he? [*Rashly.*

Con. I cannot tell, for I run out into the streets just as he had seized your landlady.

John. Plague o' my landlady, I meant t'other woman.

Con. Other woman, sir! I have seen no other woman, never since I left your house.

John. S'heart, what have I been doing here then all this while! Madam, your most humble——

Con. Good sir, be not so cruel as to leave me in this distress.

John. No, no, no, I'm only going a little way, and will be back again presently.

Con. But pray, sir, hear me! I'm in that danger—

John. No, no, no; I vow to gad, madam, no danger i' th' world. Let me alone, I warrant you. [*Exit.*

Con. He's gone, and I a lost, wretched, miserable creature, for ever.

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. O, there she is.

Con. Who's this? Antonio! the fiercest enemy I have.

Ant. Are you so nimble footed, gentlewoman? If I don't overtake you for all this, it shall go hard——She'll break my wind, with a pox to her: A plague confound all whores! [*Exit.*

Enter Mother to the 2*d Constantia, and Kinswoman.*

Kins. But, madam, be not so angry; perhaps she'll come again.

Moth. O, kinswoman, never speak of her more; for she's an odious creature to leave me thus i' th' lurch. I that have given her all her breeding, and instructed her with my own principles of education.

Kins. I protest, madam, I think she's a person that knows as much of all that as——

Moth. Knows, kinswoman! there's ne'er a woman in Italy, of thrice her years, knows so much the procedures of a true gallantry, and the infallible principles of an honourable friendship, as she does.

Kins. And, therefore, madam, you ought to love her.

Moth. No, fie upon her, nothing at all, as I am a Christian. When once a person fails in fundamentals, she's at a period with me. Besides, with all her wit, Constantia is but a fool, and calls all the *mignarderies* of a *bonne mien*, affectation.

Kins. Indeed, I must confess, she's given a little too much to the careless way.

Moth. Ay, there you have hit it, kinswoman; the careless way has quite undone her. Will ye believe me, kinswoman? as I am a Christian, I never could make her do this, nor carry her body thus, but just when my eye was upon her; as soon as ever my back was turned, whip, her elbows were quite out again: would not you strange now at this?

Kins. Bless me, sweet goodness! But pray, madam, how came Constantia to fall out with your ladyship? Did she take any thing ill of you?

Moth. As I am a christian I can't resolve you, unless it were that I led the dance first; but for that, she must excuse me. I know she dances well, but there are others who perhaps understand the right swim of it as well as she:

Enter Don FREDERICK.

And though I love Constantia——

Fred. How's this? Constantia!

Moth. I know no reason why I should be debarred the privilege of shewing my own parts too, sometimes.

Fred. If I am not mistaken, that other woman is she Don John and I were directed to, when we came first to town, to bring us acquainted with Constantia. I'll try to get some intelligence from her. Pray, lady, have I never seen you before?

Kins. Yes, sir, I think you have, with another stranger, a friend of yours, one day as I was coming out of the church.

Fred. I am right then. And, pray, who were you talking of?

Moth. Why, sir, of an inconsiderate inconsiderable person, that has at once both forfeited the honour of my concern, and the concern of her own honour.

Fred. Very fine indeed! and is all this intended for the beautiful Constantia?

Moth. O fie upon her, sir! an odious creature, as I'm a christian, no beauty at all.

Fred. Why, does not your ladyship think her handsome?

Moth. Seriously, sir, I don't think she's ugly; but, as I'm a christian, my position is, that no true beauty can be lodged in that creature, who is not in some measure buoy'd up with a just sense of what is incumbent to the devoir of a person of quality.

Fred. That position, madam, is a little severe; but however she has been incumbent formerly, as your ladyship is pleased to say, now, that she's married, and her husband owns the child, she is sufficiently justified for all she has done.

Moth. Sir, I must blushingly beg leave to say you are there in an error. I know there has been passages of love between 'em, but with a temperament so innocent and so refined, as it did impose a negative upon the very possibility of her being with child.

Fred. Sure, she is not well acquainted with her. Pray, madam, how long have you known Constantia?

Moth. Long enough, I think, sir; for I had the good fortune, or rather the ill one, to help her first to the light of the world.

Fred. Now cannot I discover, by the fineness of this dialect, whether she be the mother or the midwife! I had better ask t'other woman.

Moth. No, sir, I assure you, my daughter Constantia has never had a child: a child! ha, ha, ha! O goodness save us, a child!

Fred. O, then, she is the mother, and, it seems, is not informed of the matter. Well, madam, I shall not dispute this with you any further; but give me leave to wait upon your daughter; for her friend, I assure you, is in great impatience to see her.

Moth. Friend, sir? I know none she has. I'm sure she loathes the very sight of him.

Fred. Of whom?

Moth. Why, of Antonio, sir; he that you were pleased to say, had got my daughter with child, sir; ha, ha, ha!

Fred. Still worse and worse. 'Slife! cannot she be content with not letting me understand her; but must also resolve obstinately not to understand me, because I speak plain? Why, madam, I cannot express myself your way, therefore be not offended at me for it. I tell you I do not know Antonio, nor never named him to you; I told you that the duke has owned Constantia for his wife, that her brother and he are friends, and are both now in search after her.

Moth. Then, as I'm a christian, I suspect we have both been equally involved in the misfortune of a mistake. Sir, I am in the dernier confusion to avow, that, though my daughter Constantia has been liable to several addresses, yet she never has had the honour to be produced to his grace.

Fred. So then you put her to bed to——

Moth. Antonio, sir; one whom my ebb of fortune forced me to enter into a negotiation with, in reference to my daughter's person; but, as I'm a christian, with that candour in the action, as

I was in no kind denied to be a witness of the thing.

Fred. So now the thing is out. This is a damn'd bawd, and I as damn'd a rogue for what I did to Don John; for o' my conscience, this is that Constantia the fellow told me of. I'll make him amends, whate'er it cost me. Lady, you must give me leave not to part with you, till you meet with your daughter, for some reasons I shall tell you hereafter.

Moth. Sir, I am so highly your obligee for the manner of your enquiries, and you have grounded your determinations upon so just a basis, that I shall not be ashamed to own myself a votary to all your commands. [*Exeunt.*

Enter 2d CONSTANTIA.

2 *Con.* So, I'm once more freed from Antonio; but whither to go now, that's the question: nothing troubles me, but that he was sent up by that young fellow, for I liked him with my soul; would he had liked me so too.

Enter Don JOHN, *and a Shop-keeper.*

John. Which way went she?

Shop. Who?

John. The woman.

Shop. What woman?

John. Why, a young woman, a handsome woman, the handsomest woman thou ever saw'st in thy life; speak quickly, sirrah, or thou shalt speak no more.

Shop. Why, yonder's a woman: what a devil ails this fellow? [*Exit.*

John. O, my dear soul, take pity on me, and give me comfort; for I'm e'en dead for want of thee.

2 *Con.* O, you're a fine gentleman, indeed, to shut me up in your house, and send another man to me.

John. Pray, hear me.

2 *Con.* No, I will never hear you more, after such an injury: what would ye have done, if I had been kind to you, that could use me thus before?

John. By my troth, that's shrewdly urged.

2 *Con.* Besides, you basely broke your word.

John. But will you hear nothing? nor did you hear nothing? I had three men upon me at once, and had I not consented to let that old fellow up, who came to my rescue, they had all broken in, whether I would or no.

2 *Con.* Faith, it may be it was so, for I remember I heard a noise; but suppose it was not so, what then? Why then I'll love him however.—Hark ye, sir, I ought now to use you very scurvily. But I can't find in my heart to do it.

John. Then God's blessing on thy heart for it!

2 *Con.* But a——

John. What?

2 *Con.* I would fain——

John. Ay, so would I: come let's go.

2 *Con.* I would fain know, whether you can be kind to me?

John. That thou shalt presently. Come away.

2 *Con.* And will you always?

John. Always! I can't say so: but I will as often as I can.

2 *Con.* Phoo! I mean love me.

John. Well I mean that too.

2 *Con.* Swear then.

John. That I will upon my knees. What shall I say?

2 *Con.* Nay, use what words you please, so they be hearty, and not those that are spoken by the priest, for that charm seldom proves fortunate.

John. I swear then by thy fair self, that look'st so like a deity, and art the only thing I now can think of, that I'll adore thee to my dying day.

2 *Con.* And here I'll vow, the minute thou dost leave me, I'll leave the world; that is, kill myself.

John. O my dear heavenly creature!—[*Kisses her.*] That kiss now has almost put me into a swoon. For Heaven's sake, let's quickly out of the streets for fear of another scuffle. I durst encounter a whole army for thy sake, but yet methinks I had better try my courage another way; what think'st thou?

2 *Con.* Well, well; why don't you then?

[*As they are going out, enter* 1*st* CONSTANTIA, *and just then* ANTONIO *seizes upon her.*

John. Who's this my old new friend has got there?

Ant. O! have I caught you, gentlewoman, at last! Come, give me my gold.

Con. I hope he takes me for another, I won't answer; for I had rather he should take me for any one than who I am.

John. Pray, sir, who is that you have there by the hand?

Ant. A person of honour, sir, that has broke open my trunks, and run away with all my gold; yet I'll hold ten pounds I'll have it whipped out of her again.

2 *Con.* Done, I'll hold you ten pounds of that, now.

Ant. Ha! by my troth you have reason; and, lady, I ask your pardon. But I'll have it whipped out of you, then, gossip.

John. Hold, sir, you must not meddle with my goods.

Ant. Your goods! how came she to be yours? I'm sure I bought her of her mother for five hundred good pieces of gold, and she was a-bed with me all night too. Deny that if you dare.

2 *Con.* Well, and what did you do when I was a-bed with you all night? Confess that if you dare.

Ant. Umph! say you so?

Con. I'll try if this lady will help me, for I know not whether else to go.

Ant. I shall be ashamed, I see, utterly, except I make her hold her peace. Pray, sir, by your leave, I hope you will allow me the speech of one word with your goods here, as you call her; 'tis but a small request.

John. Ay, sir, with all my heart. How, Constantia! Madam, now you have seen that lady, I hope you will pardon the haste you met me in a little while ago; if I have committed a fault you must thank her for it.

Con. Sir, if you will for her sake be persuaded to protect me from the violence of my brother, I shall have reason to thank you both.

John. Nay, madam, now that I am in my wits again, and my heart's at ease, it shall go very hard, but I will see yours so too. I was before distracted, and 'tis not strange the love of her should hinder me from remembering what was due to you, since it made me forget myself.

Con. Sir, I do know too well the power of love by my own experience, not to pardon all the effects of it in another.

Ant. Well then, I promise you, if you will but help me to my gold again (I mean that which you and your mother stole out of my trunk) that I'll never trouble you more.

2 *Con.* A match; and 'tis the best that you and I could ever make.

John. Pray, madam, fear nothing; by my love I'll stand by you, and see that your brother shall do you no harm.

2 *Con.* Hark ye, sir, a word; how dare you talk of love, or standing by any lady but me, sir?

John. By my troth that was a fault; but I did not mean in your way, I meant it only civilly.

2 *Con.* Ay, but if you are so very civil a gentleman, we shall not be long friends. I scorn to share your love with any one whatsoever: and for my part, I'm resolved either to have all or nothing.

John. Well, my dear little rogue, thou shalt have it all presently, as soon as we can but get rid of this company.

2 *Con.* Phoo! you are always abusing me.

Enter FREDERICK *and Mother.*

Fred. Come, now, madam, let us not speak one word more, but go quietly about our business; not but that I think it the greatest pleasure in th eworld to hear you talk, but——

Moth. Do you indeed, sir? I swear then good wits jump, sir; for I have thought so myself a very great while.

Fred. You've all the reason imaginable. O, Don John, I ask thy pardon, but I hope I shall make thee amends, for I have found out the mother, and she has promised me to help thee to thy mistress again.

John. Sir, you may save your labour, the business is done, and I am fully satisfied.

Fred. And dost thou know who she is?

John. No, faith, I never asked her name.

Fred. Why, then, I'll make thee yet more satisfied; this lady here is that very Constantia——

John. Ha! thou hast not a mind to be knocked o'er the pate too, hast thou?

Fred. No, sir, nor dare you do it neither: but for certain this is that very self-same Constantia that thou and I so long looked after.

John. I thought she was something more than ordinary; but shall I tell thee now a stranger thing than all this?

Fred. What's that?

John. Why, I will never more touch any other woman for her sake.

Fred. Well, I submit; that indeed is stranger.

2 *Con.* Come, mother, deliver your purse; I have delivered up myself to this young fellow, and the bargain's made with that old fellow, so he may have his gold again, that all shall be well.

Moth. As I'm a Christian, sir, I took it away only to have the honour of restoring it again; for my hard fate having not bestowed upon me a fund which might capacitate me to make you presents of my own, I had no way left for the exercise of my generosity but by putting myself into a condition of giving back what was yours.

Ant. A very generous design indeed! So now I'll e'en turn a sober person, and leave off wenching, and this fighting, for I begin to find it does not agree with me.

Fred. Madam, I'm heartily glad to see your ladyship here; we have been in a very great disorder since we saw you. What's here, our landlady and the child again!

Enter Duke, PETRUCHIO, *and Landlady with the Child.*

Petr. Yes, we met her going to be whipped, in a drunken constable's hands that took her for another.

John. Why then, pray let her e'en be taken and whipped for herself, for on my word she deserves it.

Land. Yes, I'm sure of your good word at any time.

Con. Hark ye, dear landlady.

Land. O, sweet goodness! is it you? I have been in such a peck of troubles since I saw you; they took me, and they tumbled me, and they hauled me, and they pulled me, and they called me painted Jezabel, and the poor little babe here did so take on. Come hither, my lord, come hither; here is Constantia.

Con. For Heaven's sake, peace! yonder is my brother, and if he discovers me, I'm certainly ruined.

Duke. No, madam, there is no danger.

Con. Were there a thousand dangers in those arms, I would run thus to meet them.

Duke. O, my dear, it were not safe that any should be here at present; for now my heart is so o'erpressed with joy, that I should scarce be able to defend thee.

Petr. Sister, I'm so asham'd of all the faults which my mistake has made me guilty of, that I know not how to ask your pardon for them.

Con. No, brother, the fault was mine in mistaking you so much, as not to impart the whole truth to you at first; but having begun my love

without your consent, I never durst acquaint you with the progress of it.

Duke. Come, let the consummation of our present joys blot out the memory of all these past mistakes.

John. And when shall we consummate our joy?

2 Con. Never!—
We'll find out ways shall make them last or ever.

John. Now see the odds, 'twixt married folks and friends:
Our love begins just where their passion ends.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

PERHAPS you, gentlemen, expect to-day,
The author of this fag end of a play,
According to the modern way of wit,
Should strive to be before-hand with the pit;
Begin to rail at you, and subtly too,
Prevent th' affront, by giving the first blow.
He wants not precedents, which often sway
In matters far more weighty than a play:
But he, no grave admirer of a rule,
Won't by example learn to play the fool.
The end of plays should be to entertain,
And not to keep the auditors in pain.
Giving our price, and for what trash we please,
He thinks, the play being done, you should have ease.
No wit, no sense, no freedom, and a box,
Is much like paying money for the stocks.
Besides the author dreads the strut and mien
Of new-prais'd poets, having often seen
Some of his fellows, who have writ before,
When Nell has danc'd her jig, steal to the door,
Hear the pit clap, and with conceit of that,
Swell, and believe themselves the lord knows what.
Most writers now-a-days are grown so vain,
That once approv'd, they write, and write again,
Till they have writ away the fame they got.
Our friend this way of writing fancies not,
And hopes you will not tempt him with your praise,
To rank himself with some that write new plays:
For he knows ways enough to be undone,
Without the help of poetry for one.

A

NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

BY

MASSINGER.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

LOVELL, *an English Lord.*
Sir GILES OVERREACH, *a cruel Extortioner.*
WELLBORN, *a Prodigal.*
ALLWORTH, *a young Gentleman, Page to Lord* LOVELL.
GREEDY, *a hungry Justice of Peace.*
MARRALL, *a Term-driver, a Creature of Sir* GILES OVERREACH.
ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, WATCHALL, *Servants to the Lady* ALLWORTH.
WELLDO, *a Parson.*
TAPWELL, *an Alehouse-keeper.*
Three Creditors.

WOMEN.

Lady ALLWORTH, *a rich Widow.*
MARGARET, *Overreach's Daughter.*
FROTH, *Tapwell's Wife.*
Chambermaid.
Waiting-Woman.

SCENE,—*A County in England.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Outside of a Village Alehouse.*

WELLBORN, TAPWELL, FROTH.

Well. No bouse? nor no tobacco?
Tap. Not a suck, sir;
Not the remainder of a single can,
Left by a drunken porter; all night palled, too.
Froth. Not the dropping of the tap for your morning's draught, sir:
'Tis verity, I assure you.
Well. Verity, you brach!
The devil turned precisian! Rogue, what am I?
Tap. Troth, durst I trust you with a looking-glass,
To let you see your trim shape, you would quit me,
And take the name yourself.
Well. How, dog!
Tap. Even so, sir.
And I must tell you, if you but advance
Your Plymouth cloak, you shall be soon instructed,
There dwells, and within call, if it please your worship,
A potent monarch called a constable,

That does command a citadel, called the stocks;
Whose guards are certain files of rusty billmen,
Such as, with great dexterity, will haul
Your tattered lousy——
Well. Rascal! slave!
Froth. No rage, sir.
Tap. At his own peril! Do not put yourself
In too much heat, there being no water near
To quench your thirst; and sure, for other liquor,
As mighty ale, or beer, they are things, I take it,
You must no more remember; not in a dream, sir.
Well. Why, thou unthankful villain, dar'st thou talk thus?
Is not thy house, and all thou hast, my gift?
Tap. I find it not in chalk; and Timothy Tapwell
Does keep no other register.
Well. Am not I he
Whose riots fed and clothed thee? Wert thou not
Born on my father's land, and proud to be
A drudge in his house?
Tap. What I was, sir, it skills not;
What you are, is apparent. Now for a farewell:
Since you talk of father, in my hope it will torment you,
I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead father,
My quondam master, was a man of worship;
Old sir John Wellborn, justice of peace and *quorum*,
And stood fair to be *custos rotulorum*;
Bore the whole sway of the shire; kept a great house;
Relieved the poor, and so forth: but he dying,
And the twelve hundred a-year coming to you,
Late Master Francis, but now forlorn Wellborn—
Well. Slave, stop! or I shall lose myself.
Froth. Very hardly;
You cannot out of your way.
Tap. But to my story:
You were then a lord of acres, the prime gallant,
And I your under-butler: note the change now.
You had a merry time of't; hawks and hounds;
With choice of running horses: mistresses
Of all sorts and all sizes; yet so hot,
As their embraces made your lordships melt:
Which your uncle, sir Giles Overreach, observing,
(Resolving not to lose a drop of them)
On foolish mortgages, statutes, and bonds,
For a while supplied your looseness, and then left you.
Well. Some curate has penned this invective, mongrel,
And you have studied it.
Tap. I have not done yet.
Your lands gone, and your credit not worth a token,
You grew the common borrower; no man 'scaped
Your paper pellets, from the gentleman
To the beggars on highways, that sold you switches
In your gallantry.
Well. I shall switch your brains out.
Tap. While poor Tim Tapwell, with a little stock,
Some forty pounds or so, bought a small cottage;
Humbled myself to marriage with my Froth here;
Gave entertainment——
Well. Yes, to whores and canters,
Clubbers by night.
Tap. True, but they brought in profit,
And had a gift to pay for what they called for;
And stuck not like your mastership. The poor income
I gleaned from them hath made me in my parish
Thought worthy to be scavenger; and, in time,
May rise to be overseer of the poor;
Which, if I do, on your petition, Wellborn,
I may allow you thirteen pence a quarter;
And you shall thank my worship.
Well. Thus, you dog-bolt——
And thus—— [*Beats him.*
Tap. Cry out for help!
Well. Stir, and thou diest:
Your potent prince, the constable, shall not save you.
Hear me, ungrateful hell-hound! did not I
Make purses for you? then you licked my boots,
And thought your holiday cloak too coarse to clean them.
'Twas I, that when I heard thee swear, if ever
Thou could'st arrive at forty pounds, thou would'st
Live like an emperor; 'twas I that gave it,
In ready gold. Deny this, wretch!
Tap. I must, sir.
For, from the tavern to the tap-house, all,
On forfeiture of their licences, stand bound
Never to remember who their best guests were,
If they grew poor like you.
Well. They are well rewarded
That beggar themselves to make such cuckolds rich.
Thou viper, thankless viper! impudent bawd!
But since you are grown forgetful, I will help
Your memory, and tread thee into mortar;
Not leave one bone unbroken. [*Beats him again.*
Tap. Oh!
Froth. Ask mercy!
Well. 'Twill not be granted.

Enter ALLWORTH.

Allw. Hold, for my sake, hold!
Deny me, Frank? they are not worth your anger.
Well. For once thou hast redeemed them from this sceptre: [*Shaking his cudgel.*
But let them vanish, creeping on their knees;
And if they grumble, I revoke my pardon.
Froth. This comes of your prating, husband; you presumed
On your ambling wit, and must use your glib tongue,
Though you are beaten lame for't.
Tap. Patience, Froth;
There's law to cure our bruises.
[*They go off on their hands and knees.*
Well. Sent to your mother?
Allw. My lady, Frank, my patroness! my all!
She's such a mourner for my father's death,
And, in her love to him, so favours me,
That I cannot pay too much observance to her.

There are few such stepdames.
Well. 'Tis a noble widow,
And keeps her reputation pure, and clear
From the least taint of infamy: her life,
With the splendour of her actions, leaves no tongue
To envy or detraction. Pr'ythee, tell me;
Has she no suitors?
Allw. Even the best of the shire, Frank,
My lord excepted: such as sue, and send,
And send, and sue again; but to no purpose.
Their frequent visits have not gained her presence;
Yet she's so far from sullenness and pride,
That I dare undertake you shall meet from her
A liberal entertainment. I can give you
A catalogue of her suitors' names.
Well. Forbear it,
While I give you good counsel. I am bound to it.
Thy father was my friend; and that affection
I bore to him, in right descends to thee:
Thou art a handsome and a hopeful youth,
Nor will I have the least affront stick on thee,
If I with any danger can prevent it.
Allw. I thank your noble care; but, pray you, in what
Do I run the hazard?
Well. Art thou not in love?
Put it not off with wonder.
Allw. In love, at my years?
Well. You think you walk in clouds, but are transparent.
I have heard all, and the choice that you have made;
And, with my finger, can point out the north star
By which the loadstone of your folly's guided.
And, to confirm this true, what think ye of
Fair Margaret, the only child and heir
Of cormorant Overreach? Dost blush and start,
To hear her only named? Blush at your want
Of wit and reason.
Allw. You are too bitter, sir.
Well. Wounds of this nature are not to be cured
With balms, but corrosives. I must be plain:
Art thou scarce manumized from the porter's lodge,
And yet sworn servant to the pantoffle,
And dar'st thou dream of marriage?
——I fear
'Twill be concluded for impossible,
That there is now, or e'er shall be hereafter,
A handsome page, or player's boy of fourteen,
But either loves a wench, or drabs love him;
Court-waiters not exempted.
Allw. This is madness.
Howe'er you have discovered my intents,
You know my aims are lawful; and if ever
The queen of flowers, the glory of the spring,
The sweetest comfort to our smell, the rose,
Sprang from an envious briar, I may infer,
There's such disparity in their conditions,
Between the goddess of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl, her father.
Well. Grant this true,
As I believe it; canst thou ever hope
To enjoy a quiet bed with her, whose father
Ruined thy state?
Allw. And yours too.
Well. I confess it.
True; I must tell you as a friend, and freely,
That, where impossibilities are apparent,
'Tis indiscretion to nourish hopes.
Canst thou imagine (let not self-love blind thee)
That sir Giles Overreach (that to make her great
In swelling titles, without touch of conscience,
Will cut his neighbour's throat, and I hope his own too)
Will e'er consent to make her thine? Give o'er,
And think of some course suitable to thy rank,
And prosper in it.
Allw. You have well advised me;
But, in the mean time, you, that are so studious
Of my affairs, wholly neglect your own.
Remember yourself, and in what plight you are.
Well. No matter, no matter.
Allw. Yes, 'tis much material:
You know my fortune, and my means; yet something
I can spare from myself, to help your wants.
Well. How's this?
Allw. Nay, be not angry. There's eight pieces,
To put you in better fashion.
Well. Money from thee?
From a boy, a stipendiary? one that lives
At the devotion of a step-mother,
And the uncertain favour of a lord?
I'll eat my arms first. Howsoe'er blind fortune
Hath spent the utmost of her malice on me;
Though I am vomited out of an alehouse,
And thus accoutred; know not where to eat,
Or drink, or sleep, but underneath this canopy;
Although I thank thee, I despise thy offer.
And as I, in my madness, broke my state,
Without the assistance of another's brain,
In my right wits I'll piece it; at the worst,
Die thus, and be forgotten.
Allw. A strange humour! [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II.—*A Chamber in Lady* ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *and* WATCHALL.

Order. Set all things right, or, as my name is Order,
And by this staff of office that commands you,
This chain, and double ruff, symbols of power,
Whoever misses in his function,
For one whole week makes forfeiture of his breakfast,
And privilege in the wine cellar.
Amble. You are merry,
Good master steward.
Furn. Let him; I'll be angry.
Amble. Why, fellow Furnace, 'tis not twelve o'clock yet,
Nor dinner taking up; then 'tis allowed
Cooks, by their places, may be choleric.

Furn. You think you have spoke wisely, good-
man Amble,
My lady's go-before.
Order. Nay, nay, no wrangling.
Furn. Twit me with the authority of the kit-
chen?
At all hours, and all places, I'll be angry;
And, thus provoked, when I am at my prayers
I will be angry.
Amble. There was no hurt meant.
Furn. I am friends with thee, and yet I will
be angry.
Order. With whom?
Furn. No matter whom: yet, now I think on't,
I am angry with my lady.
Watch. Heaven forbid, man!
Order. What cause has she given thee?
Furn. Cause enough, master steward:
I was entertained by her to please her palate,
And, till she forswore eating, I performed it.
Now, since our master, noble Allworth, died,
Though I crack my brains to find out tempting
sauces,
And raise fortifications in the pastry,
Such as might serve for models in the Low
Countries;
Which if they had been practised at Breda,
Spinola might have thrown his cap at it, and ne'er
took it—
Amble. But you had wanted matter there to
work on.
Furn. Matter! with six eggs and a strike of
rye meal,
I had kept the town till doomsday, and perhaps
longer.
Order. But what's this to your pet against my
lady?
Furn. What's this? marry this: when I am
three parts roasted,
And the fourth part par-boiled, to prepare her
viands,
She keeps her chamber, dines with a panada,
Or water-gruel; my sweat never thought on.
Order. But your art is seen in the dining room.
Furn. By whom?
By such as pretend love to her; but come
To feed upon her. Yet, of all the harpies
That do devour her, I am out of charity
With none so much, as the thin-gutted squire,
That's stolen into commission.
Order. Justice Greedy?
Furn. The same, the same. Meat's cast away
upon him;
It never thrives. He holds this paradox,
Who eats not well, can ne'er do justice well.
His stomach's as insatiate as the grave, or strum-
pet's ravenous appetites.
Amble. One knocks.
[ALLWORTH *knocks, and enters.*
Order. Our late young master.
Amble. Welcome, sir.
Furn. Your hand:
If you have a stomach, a cold bake-meat's ready.
Order. His father's picture in little.
Furn. We are all your servants.
Amble. In you he lives.
Allw. At once, my thanks to all;
This is yet some comfort. Is my lady stirring?

Enter the Lady ALLWORTH *and Attendants.*

Order. Her presence answers for us.
Lady. Sort those silks well.
I'll take the air alone. [*Exeunt Attendants.*
Furn. You air and air;
But will you never taste but spoonmeat more?
To what use serve I?
Lady. Prithee be not angry;
I shall ere long; in the mean time there is gold
To buy thee aprons and a summer suit.
Furn. I am appeased, and Furnace now grows
cool.
Lady. And, as I gave directions, if this morning
I am visited by any, entertain them
As heretofore: but say, in my estate,
I am indisposed.
Order. I shall, madam.
Lady. Do, and leave me.
[*Exeunt* ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *&c.*
Nay, stay you, Allworth.
Allw. I shall gladly grow here,
To wait on your commands.
Lady. So soon turned courtier!
Allw. Style not that courtship, madam, which
is duty,
Purchased on your part.
Lady. Well, you shall o'ercome;
I'll not contend in words. How is it with
Your noble master?
Allw. Ever like himself;
No scruple lessened in the full weight of ho-
nour:
He did command me (pardon my presumption),
As his unworthy deputy, to kiss
Your ladyship's fair hands.
Lady. I am honoured in
His favour to me. Does he hold his purpose
For the Low Countries?
Allw. Constantly, good madam:
But he will, in person, first present his service.
Lady. And how approve you of his course?
you are yet,
Like virgin parchment, capable of any
Inscription, vicious or honourable.
I will not force your will, but leave you free
To your own election.
Allw. Any form you please
I will put on: but, might I make my choice,
With humble emulation, I would follow
The path my lord marks to me.
Lady. 'Tis well answered,
And I commend your spirit: you had a father,
(Blessed be his memory!) that some few hours
Before the will of Heaven took him from me,
Who did commend you, by the dearest ties
Of perfect love between us, to my charge:
And, therefore, what I speak, you are bound to
hear
With such respect as if he lived in me.
He was my husband; and howe'er you are not
Son of my womb, you may be of my love,

Provided you deserve it.
All. I have found you,
Most honoured madam, the best mother to me;
And with my utmost strength of care and service,
Will labour that you never may repent
Your bounties showered upon me.
Lady. I much hope it.
These were your father's words: If e'er my son
Follow the war, tell him it is a school
Where all the principles, tending to honour,
Are taught, if truly followed: But for such
As repair thither, as a place in which
They do presume they may, with license, practise
Their lusts and riots, they shall never merit
The noble name of soldiers. To dare boldly
In a fair cause, and, for their country's safety,
To run upon the cannon's mouth undaunted;
To obey their leaders, and shun mutinies;
To bear, with patience, the winter's cold,
And summer's scorching heat, and not to faint,
When plenty of provision fails, with hunger,
Are the essential parts make up a soldier:
Not swearing, dice, or drinking.
All. There's no syllable
You speak, but is to me an oracle;
Which but to doubt were impious.
Lady. To conclude;
Beware ill company; for often men
Are like to those with whom they do converse:
And from one man I warn you, and that's Well-born:
Not 'cause he's poor; that rather claims your pity;
But that he's in his manners so debauched,
And hath to vicious courses sold himself.
'Tis true, your father loved him, while he was
Worthy the loving; but, if he had lived
To have seen him as he is, he had cast him off,
As you must do.
All. I shall obey in all things.
Lady. Follow me to my chamber; you shall have gold
To furnish you like my son, and still supplied
As I hear from you.
All. I am still your creature. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Hall in Lady* ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, ORDER, AMBLE, WATCHALL, FURNACE, *and* MARRALL.

Greedy. Not to be seen?
Over. Still cloistered up? her reason,
I hope, assures her, though she makes herself
Close prisoner ever for her husband's loss,
'Twill not recover him.
Ord. Sir, it is her will;
Which we, that are her servants, ought to serve,
And not dispute. Howe'er, you are nobly welcome:
And, if you please to stay, that you may think so,
There came, not six days since, from Hull, a pipe
Of rich canary; which shall spend itself
For my lady's honour.
Greedy. Is it of the right race?
Ord. Yes, Master Greedy.
Amb. How his mouth runs over!
Furn. I'll make it run and run. Save your good worship!
Greedy. Honest Master Cook, thy hand; again! How I love thee!
Are the good dishes still in being? speak, boy.
Furn. If you have a mind to feed, there is a chine
Of beef well seasoned.
Greedy. Good.
Furn. A pheasant, larded.
Greedy. That I might now give thanks for't!
Furn. Other kick-shaws;
Besides, there came last night, from the forest of Sherwood,
The fattest stag I ever cooked.
Greedy. A stag, man?
Furn. A stag, sir; part of it prepared for dinner,
And baked in puff-paste.
Greedy. Puff-paste, too, Sir Giles!
A ponderous chine of beef! a pheasant larded!
And red deer, too, Sir Giles, and baked in puff-paste!
All business set aside, let us give thanks here.
Furn. How the lean skeleton's rapt!
Over. You know we cannot.
Mar. Your worships are to sit on a commission,
And if you fail to come, you lose the cause.
Greedy. Cause me no causes; I'll prove 't, for such a dinner,
We may put off a commission; you shall find it *Henrici decimo quarto.*
Over. Fie, Master Greedy!
Will you lose me a thousand pounds for a dinner?
No more, for shame! We must forget the belly,
When we think of profit.
Greedy. Well, you shall o'er-rule me.
I could even cry now. Do you hear me, Master Cook?
Send but a corner of that immortal pasty;
And I, in thankfulness, will, by your boy,
Send you a brace of three-pences.
Furn. Will you be so prodigal?
Over. Remember me to your lady.

Enter WELLBORN.

Who have we here?
Well. You know me.
Over. I did once, but now I will not:
Thou art no blood of mine. Avaunt, thou beggar!
If ever thou presume to own me more,
I'll have thee caged and whipped.
Greedy. I'll grant the warrant.
Think of pye-corner, Furnace!
[*Exeunt* OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.
Amb. Will you out, sir?
I wonder how you durst creep in.
Ord. This is rudeness
And saucy impudence.

Amb. Cannot you stay
To be served among your fellows from the basket,
But you must press into the hall?
Furn. Pr'ythee, vanish
Into some out-house, though it be the pig-sty;
My scullion shall come to thee.

Enter ALLWORTH.

Well. This is rare:
Oh, here's Tom Allworth! Tom!
Allw. We must be strangers;
Nor would I have you seen here for a million.
[*Exit.*
Well. Better and better. He contemns me, too.

Enter Waiting-woman and Chambermaid.

Wom. Foh, what a smell's here! what thing's this?
Cham. A creature
Made out of the privy. Let us hence, for love's sake,
Or I shall swoon.
Wom. I begin to faint already.
[*Exeunt Waiting-woman and Chambermaid.*
Furn. Will you know your way?
Amb. Or shall we teach it you,
By the head and shoulders?
Well. No; I will not stir:
Do you mark, I will not. Let me see the wretch
That dares attempt to force me. Why, you slaves,
Created only to make legs, and cringe;
To carry in a dish, and shift a trencher;
That have not souls only to hope a blessing
Beyond black jacks or flaggons; you that were born
Only to consume meat and drink, and batten
Upon reversions!——Who advances? who
Shews me the way?
Ord. My lady!

Enter Lady ALLWORTH, *Waiting-woman, and Chambermaid.*

Cham. Here's the monster.
Wom. Sweet madam, keep your glove to your nose.
Cham. Or let me
Fetch some perfumes that may be predominant;
You wrong yourself else.
Well. Madam, my designs bear me to you.
Lady. To me?
Well. And though I have met with
But ragged entertainment from your grooms here,
I hope from you to receive that noble usage,
As may become the true friend of your husband;
And then I shall forget these.
Lady. I am amazed,
To see and hear this rudeness. Dar'st thou think,
Though sworn, that it can ever find belief,
That I, who to the best men of this country
Denied my presence since my husband's death,
Can fall so low as to change words with thee?
Thou son of infamy! forbear my house,
And know and keep the distance that's between us;
Or, though it be against my gentler temper,
I shall take order you no more shall be
An eye-sore to me.
Well. Scorn me not, good lady;
But as, in form, you are angelical,
Imitate the heavenly natures, and vouchsafe
At the least a while to hear me. You will grant,
The blood that runs in this arm is as noble
As that which fills your veins. Those costly jewels,
And those rich clothes you wear; your swelling titles,
Equipage, and fortune; your men's observance,
And women's flattery, are in you no virtues;
Nor these rags, with my poverty, in me vices.
You have a fair fame, and, I know, deserve it;
Yet, lady, I must say, in nothing more,
Than in the pious sorrow you have shewn
For your late noble husband.
Ord. How she starts!
Furn. And hardly can keep her finger from the eye,
To hear him named.
Lady. Have you aught else to say?
Well. That husband, madam, was once, in his fortune,
Almost as low as I. Want, debts, and quarrels,
Lay heavy on him: let it not be thought
A boast in me, though I say, I relieved him.
'Twas I, that gave him fashion; mine, the sword
That did, on all occasions, second his;
I brought him on and off, with honour, lady:
And when in all men's judgments he was sunk,
And in his own hopes not to be buoyed up,
I stepped unto him, took him by the hand,
And set him upright.
Furn. Are not we base rogues,
That could forget this?
Well. I confess, you made him
Master of your estate; nor could your friends,
Though he brought no wealth with him, blame you for it:
For he had a shape, and, to that shape, a mind,
Made up of all parts, either great or noble,
So winning a behaviour, not to be
Resisted, madam.
Lady. 'Tis most true, he had.
Well. For his sake, then, in that I was his friend,
Do not contemn me.
Lady. For what's past excuse me;
I will redeem it. Order, give the gentleman
A hundred pounds.
Well. Madam, on no terms:
I will not beg nor borrow sixpence of you;
But be supplied elsewhere, or want thus ever.
Only one suit I make, which you deny not
To strangers; and 'tis this. [*Whispers to her.*
Lady. Fie! nothing else?
Well. Nothing; unless you please to charge your servants
To throw away a little respect upon me.
Lady. What you demand is yours.
Well. I thank you, lady. [*Exit Lady.*
Now, what can be wrought out of such a suit,

Is yet in supposition. I've said all;
When you please, you may retire—[*Servants bow.*]—Nay, all's forgotten;
And for a lucky omen to my project,
Shake hands, and end all quarrels in the cellar.
Ord. Agreed, agreed.
Furn. Still merry Mr Wellborn. [*Exeunt*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* OVERREACH'S *House.*

Enter OVERREACH *and* MARRALL.

Over. He's gone, I warrant thee; this commission crushed him.
Mar. Your worships have the way on't, and ne'er miss
To squeeze these unthrifts into air; and yet
The chap-fallen justice did his part, returning
For your advantage the certificate,
Against his conscience and his knowledge, too;
(With your good favour) to the utter ruin
Of the poor farmer.
Over. 'Twas for these good ends
I made him a justice. He, that bribes his belly,
Is certain to command his soul.
Mar. I wonder
(Still with your licence) why, your worship having
The power to put this thin gut in commission,
You are not in't yourself.
Over. Thou art a fool;
In being out of office, I am out of danger;
Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,
I might, or out of wilfulness or error,
Run myself finely into a præmunire,
And so become a prey to the informer.
No, I'll have none of 't; 'tis enough I keep
Greedy at my devotion: so he serve
My purposes, let him hang, or damn, I care not;
Friendship is but a word.
Mar. You are all wisdom.
Over. I would be worldly wise; for the other wisdom,
That does prescribe us a well-governed life,
And to do right to others as ourselves,
I value not an atom.
Mar. What course take you,
(With your good patience) to hedge in the manor
Of your neighbour, Master Frugal? As 'tis said,
He will nor sell, nor borrow, nor exchange;
And his land, lying in the midst of your many lordships,
Is a foul blemish.
Over. I have thought on't, Marrall;
And it shall take. I must have all men sellers,
And I the only purchaser.
Mar. 'Tis most fit, sir.
Over. I'll therefore buy some cottage near his manor;
Which done, I'll make my men break ope his fences,
Ride o'er his standing corn, and in the night
Set fire on his barns, or break his cattle's legs.
These trespasses draw on suits, and suits expences;
Which I can spare, but will soon beggar him.
When I have harried him thus two or three years,
Though he sue *forma pauperis*, in spite
Of all his thrift and care, he'll grow behind hand.
Mar. The best I ever heard; I could adore you.
Over. Then, with the favour of my man of law,
I will pretend some title; want will force him
To put it to arbitrament; then, if he sell
For half the value, he shall have ready money,
And I possess his land.
Mar. 'Tis above wonder.
Wellborn was apt to sell, and needed not
These fine arts, sir, to hook him in.
Over. Well thought on.
This varlet, Marrall, lives too long to upbraid me
With my close cheat put upon him. Will nor cold
Nor hunger kill him?
Mar. I know not what to think on't.
I have used all means; and the last night I caused
His host, the tapster, to turn him out of doors;
And have been since with all your friends and tenants;
And, on the forfeit of your favour, charged them,
Though a crust of mouldy bread would keep him from starving,
Yet they should not relieve him. This is done, sir.
Over. That was something, Marrall; but thou must go farther;
And suddenly, Marrall.
Mar. Where and when you please, sir.
Over. I would have thee seek him out; and, if thou canst,
Persuade him, that 'tis better steal than beg:
Then, if I prove he have but robbed a hen-roost,
Not all the world shall save him from the gallows.
Do any thing to work him to despair,
And 'tis thy master-piece.
Mar. I will do my best, sir.
Over. I am now on my main work, with the lord Lovell;
The gallant-minded, popular lord Lovell,
The minion of the people's love. I hear
He's come into the country; and my aims are
To insinuate myself into his knowledge,
And then invite him to my house.
Mar. I have you.
This points at my young mistress.
Over. She must part with
That humble title, and write honourable,

Right honourable, Marrall; my right honourable daughter;
If all I have, or e'er shall get, will do it.
I'll have her well attended; there are ladies
Of errant knights decayed, and brought so low,
That, for cast clothes, and meat, will gladly serve her;
And 'tis my glory, though I came from the city,
To have their issue, whom I have undone,
To kneel to mine, as bond-slaves.
Mar. 'Tis fit state, sir.
Over. And therefore, I'll not have a chamber-maid
That ties her shoes, or any meaner office,
But such whose fathers were right worshipful.
'Tis a rich man's pride! there having ever been
More than a feud, a strange antipathy
Between us and true gentry.

Enter WELLBORN.

Mar. See, who's here, sir!
Over. Hence, monster, prodigy!
Well. Sir, your wife's nephew;
She and my father tumbled in one belly.
Over. Avoid my sight, thy breath's infectious, rogue!
I shun thee as a leprosy, or the plague.
Come hither, Marrall; this is the time to work him. [*Exit* OVER.
Mar. I warrant you, sir.
Well. By this light, I think he's mad.
Mar. Mad! had you ta'en compassion on yourself,
You long since had been mad.
Well. You have ta'en a course,
Between you and my venerable uncle,
To make me so.
Mar. The more pale-spirited you,
That would not be instructed. I swear deeply—
Well. By what?
Mar. By my religion.
Well. Thy religion!
The devil's creed; but what would you have done?
Mar. Had there been but one tree in all the shire,
Nor any hope to compass a penny halter,
Before, like you, I had outlived my fortunes,
A withe had served my turn to hang myself.
I am zealous in your cause: pray you hang yourself;
And presently, as you love your credit.
Well. I thank you.
Mar. Will you stay till you die in a ditch?
Or lice devour you?
Or, if you dare not do the feat yourself,
But that you'll put the state to charge and trouble,
Is there no purse to be cut? house to be broken?
Or market-woman with eggs that you may murder,
And so dispatch the business?
Well. Here's variety,
I must confess; but I'll accept of none
Of all your gentle offers, I assure you.
Mar. Why, have you hope ever to eat again?
Or drink? or be the master of three farthings?
If you like not hanging, drown yourself; take some course
For your reputation.
Well. 'Twill not do, dear tempter,
With all the rhetoric the fiend hath taught you.
I am as far as thou art from despair.
Nay, I have confidence, which is more than hope,
To live, and suddenly, better than ever.
Mar. Ha! ha! these castles you build in the air,
Will not persuade me, or to give or lend
A token to you.
Well. I'll be more kind to thee.
Come, thou shalt dine with me.
Mar. With you?
Well. Nay, more, dine *gratis*.
Mar. Under what hedge, I pray you? or at whose cost?
Are they padders, or Abram-men, that are your consorts?
Well. Thou art incredulous: but thou shalt dine,
Not alone at her house, but with a gallant lady;
With me, and with a lady.
Mar. Lady! what lady?
With the lady of the lake, or queen of fairies?
For I know it must be an enchanted dinner.
Well. With the lady Allworth, knave.
Mar. Nay, now there's hope
Thy brain is cracked.
Well. Mark there, with what respect
I am entertained.
Mar. With choice, no doubt, of dog-whips.
Why, dost thou ever hope to pass her porter?
Well. 'Tis not far off: go with me: trust thine own eyes.
Mar. Troth, in my hope, or my assurance, rather,
To see thee curvet, and mount like a dog in a blanket,
If ever thou presume to pass her threshold,
I will endure thy company.
Well. Come along, then. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall in Lady* ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter ALLWORTH, ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *Waiting-woman, and Chambermaid.*

Wom. Could your not command your leisure one hour longer?
Cham. Or half an hour?
All. I have told you what my haste is:
Besides, being now another's, not mine own,
Howe'er I much desire to enjoy you longer,
My duty suffers, if, to please myself,
I should neglect my lord.
Wom. Pray you, do me the favour
To put these few quince cakes into your pocket;
They are of mine own preserving.
Cham. And this marmalade;
'Tis comfortable for your stomach.

Wom. And at parting,
Excuse me, if I beg a farewell from you.
Cham. You are still before me. I move the same suit, sir. [ALLW. *kisses them.*
Furn. How greedy these chamberers are of a beardless chin!
I think the tits will ravish him.
Allw. My service
To both.
Wom. Ours waits on you.
Cham. And shall do ever.
Ord. You are my lady's charge, be therefore careful
That you sustain your parts.
Wom. We can bear, I warrant you.
[*Exeunt Waiting-wom. and Chamb.*
Furn. Here, drink it off; the ingredients are cordial,
And this the true elixir; it hath boiled
Since midnight for you. 'Tis the quintessence
Of five cocks of the game, ten dozen of sparrows,
Knuckles of veal, potatoe-roots, and marrow,
Coral, and ambergris: were you two years older,
And I had a wife, or gamesome mistress,
I durst trust you with neither: you need not bait
After this, I warrant you, though your journey's long;
You may ride on the strength of this till to-morrow morning.
Allw. Your court'sies o'erwhelm me: I much grieve
To part from such true friends, and yet find comfort,
My attendance on my honourable lord,
Whose resolution holds to visit my lady,
Will speedily bring me back.
[*Knocking at the gate.* MARRALL *and* WELLBORN *within.*
Mar. Dar'st thou venture farther?
Well. Yes, yes, and knock again.
Ord. 'Tis he; disperse!
Amb. Perform it bravely. [*Exit.*
Furn. I know my cue, ne'er doubt me. [*Exit.*

Enter WATCHALL, *introducing* MARRALL *and* WELLBORN.

Watch. Beast that I was to make you stay!
Most welcome;
You were long since expected.
Well. Say so much
To my friend, I pray you.
Watch. For your sake I will, sir. [*Exit.*
Mar. For his sake!
Well. Mum: this is nothing.
Mar. More than ever
I would have believed, though I had found it in my primer.
Allw. When I have given you reasons for my late harshness,
You'll pardon and excuse me: for, believe me,
Though now I part abruptly in my service,
I will deserve it.
Mar. Service! with a vengeance!
Well. I am satisfied; farewell, Tom!
Allw. All joy stay with you. [*Exit* ALLW.

Enter AMBLE.

Amb. You are happily encountered: I yet never
Presented one so welcome, as I know
You will be, to my lady.
Mar. This is some vision;
Or sure these men are mad, to worship a dunghill;
It cannot be a truth.
Well. Be still a pagan,
An unbelieving infidel; be so, miscreant,
And meditate on blankets, and on dog-whips.

Enter FURNACE.

Furn. I am glad you are come; until I know your pleasure,
I knew not how to serve up my lady's dinner.
Mar. His pleasure! is it possible? [*Aside.*
Well. What's thy will?
Furn. Marry, sir, I have some growse and turkey chicken,
Some rails and quails; and my lady willed me ask you
What kind of sauces best affect your palate,
That I may use my utmost skill to please it.
Mar. The devil's entered this cook: sauce for his palate!
That, on my knowledge, for almost this twelvemonth,
Durst wish but cheese-parings and brown bread on Sundays!
Well. That way I like them best.
Furn. It shall be done, sir. [*Exit* FURN.
Well. What think you of the hedge we shall dine under?
Shall we feed *gratis*?
Mar. I know not what to think:
Pray you, make me not mad.

Enter ORDER.

Ord. This place becomes you not;
Pray you, walk, sir, to the dining-room.
Well. I am well here,
Till her ladyship quits her chamber.
Mar. Well here, say you?
'Tis a rare change! but yesterday you thought
Yourself well in a barn, wrapped up in pease straw.
Ord. Sir, my lady. [*Exit* ORDER.

Re-enter Waiting-woman and Chambermaid.

Wom. O! sir, you are wished for.
Cham. My lady dream'd, sir, of you.
Wom. And the first command she gave, after she rose,
Was (her devotions done) to give her notice
When you approached here.
Cham. Which is done, on my virtue.
Mar. I shall be converted; I begin to grow
Into a new belief, which saints nor angels
Could have won me to have faith in.
Wom. Sir, my lady!

Enter Lady.

Lady. I come to meet you, and languished ti I saw you.
This first kiss is for form; I allow a second
To such a friend.

Mar. To such a friend! Heaven bless me!
Well. I am wholly yours; yet, madam, if you please
To grace this gentleman with a salute——
Mar. Salute me at his bidding!
Well. I shall receive it
As a most high favour.
Lady. Sir, you may command me.
Well. Run backward from a lady! and such a lady!
Mar. To kiss her foot, is, to poor me, a favour
I am unworthy of—— [*Offers to kiss her foot.*
Lady. Nay, pray you, rise;
And, since you are so humble, I'll exalt you;
You shall dine with me to-day, at mine own table.
Mar. Your ladyship's table! I am not good enough
To sit at your steward's board.
Lady. You are too modest;
I will not be denied.

Enter FURNACE.

Furn. Will you still be babbling,
Till your meat freeze on the table? The old trick still;
My art ne'er thought on!
Lady. Your arm, Mr Wellborn:
Nay, keep us company.
Mar. I was never so graced.
[*Exeunt* WELLBORN, *Lady*, AMBLE, MARRALL, *Waiting-woman, and Chambermaid.*
Ord. So, we have played our parts, and are come off well.
But if I know the mystery, why my lady
Consented to it, or why Master Wellborn
Desired it, may I perish!
Furn. Would I had
The roasting of his heart, that cheated him,
And forces the poor gentleman to these shifts!
By fire! (for cooks are Persians, and swear by it)
Of all the griping and extorting tyrants
I ever heard or read of, I ne'er met
A match to sir Giles Overreach.
Ord. What will you take
To tell him so, fellow Furnace?
Furn. Just as much
As my throat is worth; for that would be the price on't.
To have a usurer that starves himself,
And wears a cloak of one-and-twenty years
On a suit of fourteen groats, bought of the hangman,
To grow rich, and then purchase, is too common:
But this sir Giles feeds high, keeps many servants,
Who must, at his command, do any outrage;
Rich in his habit; vast in his expences;
Yet he to admiration still increases
In wealth and lordships.
Ord. He frights men out of their estates,
And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill men,
As they were cobwebs. No man dares reprove him.
Such a spirit to dare, and power to do, were never
Lodged so unluckily.

Enter AMBLE.

Amb. Ha! ha! I shall burst.
Ord. Contain thyself, man.
Furn. Or make us partakers
Of your sudden mirth.
Amb. Ha! ha! my lady has got
Such a guest at her table! this term-driver, Marrall;
This snipe of an attorney—
Furn. What of him, man?
Amb. The knave thinks still he's at the cook-shop in Ram-alley,
Where the clerks divide, and the elder is to choose;
And feeds so slovenly!
Furn. Is this all?
Amb. My lady
Drank to him for fashion's sake, or to please Master Wellborn.
As I live, he rises and takes up a dish,
In which there were some remnants of a boiled capon,
And pledges her in white broth.
Furn. Nay, 'tis like
The rest of his tribe.
Amb. And when I brought him wine,
He leaves his stool, and after a leg or two,
Most humbly thanks my worship.
Ord. Risen already!
Amb. I shall be chid.

Enter Lady, WELLBORN, *and* MARRALL.

Furn. My lady frowns.
Lady. You wait well!
Let me have no more of this; I observed your jeering.
Sirrah, I'll have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table, be he ne'er so mean,
When I am present, is not your companion.
Ord. Nay, she'll preserve what's due to her.
Furn. This refreshing
Follows your flux of laughter.
Lady. You are master [*To* WELL.
Of your own will. I know so much of manners,
As not to enquire your purposes; in a word,
To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own.
Well. Mark that.
Mar. With reverence, sir,
An' it like your worship.
Well. Trouble yourself no farther,
Dear madam; my heart's full of zeal and service,
However in my language I am sparing.
Come, Master Marrall.
Mar. I attend your worship.
[*Exeunt* WELL. *and* MAR.
Lady. I see in your looks you are sorry, and you know me

An easy mistress: be merry: I have forgot all.
Order and Furnace, come with me; I must give you
Further directions.
Ord. What you please.
Furn. We are ready. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Country.*

Enter WELLBORN *and* MARRALL.

Well. I think I am in a good way.
Mar. Good, sir! the best way;
The certain best way.
Well. There are casualties
That men are subject to.
Mar. You are above them:
And as you are already worshipful,
I hope ere long you will increase in worship,
And be right worshipful.
Well. Pr'ythee do not flout me.
What I shall be, I shall be. Is't for your ease,
You keep your hat off?
Mar. Ease, and it like your worship!
I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long,
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel nuts, as to be covered
When your worship's present.
Well. Is not this a true rogue, [*Aside.*
That, out of mere hope of a future cozenage,
Can turn thus suddenly? tis rank already.
Mar. I know your worship's wise, and needs no counsel;
Yet if, in my desire to do you service,
I humbly offer my advice, (but still
Under correction) I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.
Well. No; speak freely.
Mar. Then, in my judgment, sir, my simple judgment,
(Still with your worship's favour) I could wish you
A better habit; for this cannot be
But much distasteful to the noble lady
(I say no more) that loves you: for, this morning,
To me, (and I am but a swine to her)
Before the assurance of her wealth perfumed you,
You savoured not of amber.
Well. I do now, then!
Mar. This your batoon hath got a touch of it.— [*Kisses the end of his cudgel.*
Yet, if you please, for change, I have twenty pounds here,
Which, out of my true love, I presently
Lay down at your worship's feet: 'twill serve to buy you
A riding-suit.
Well. But where's the horse?
Mar. My gelding
Is at your service: nay, you shall ride me,
Before your worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk a-foot. Alas! when you are lord
Of this lady's manor, (as I know you will be)
You may with the lease of glebe-land, called Knaves' Acre,
(A place I would manure) requite your vassal.
Well. I thank thy love; but must make no use of it.
What's twenty pounds?
Mar. 'Tis all that I can make, sir.
Well. Dost thou think, though I want clothes I could not have them,
For one word to my lady?
Mar. As I know not that!
Well. Come, I'll tell thee a secret, and so leave thee.
I'll not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we are married,
(There being no woman but is sometimes froward)
To hit me in the teeth, and say she was forced
To buy my wedding-clothes, and took me on
With a plain riding-suit and an ambling nag.
No; I'll be furnished something like myself:
And so farewell. For thy suit, touching Knaves' Acre,
When it is mine, 'tis thine.
Mar. I thank your worship. [*Exit* WELL.
How was I cozened in the calculation
Of this man's fortune! my master cozened too,
Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men;
For that is our profession. Well, well, Master Wellborn,
You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be cheated:
Which, if the fates please, when you are possessed
Of the land and lady, you *sans question* shall be.
I'll presently think of the means.
[*Walks by, musing.*

Enter OVERREACH.

Over. Sirrah, take my horse;
I'll walk to get me an appetite. 'Tis but a mile;
And exercise will keep me from being purfey.
Ha! Marrall! is he conjuring? Perhaps
The knave has wrought the prodigal to do
Some outrage on himself, and now he feels
Compunction in his conscience for't: no matter,
So it be done.—Marrall!
Mar. Sir.
Over. How succeed we
In our plot on Wellborn?
Mar. Never better, sir.
Over. Has he hanged or drowned himself?
Mar. No, sir, he lives—
Lives once more to be made a prey to you;
A greater prey than ever.
Over. Art thou in thy wits?
If thou art, reveal this miracle, and briefly.
Mar. A lady, sir, is fallen in love with him.
Over. With him! What lady?
Mar. The rich lady Allworth.
Over. Thou dolt! how dar'st thou speak this?
Mar. I speak truth;
And I do so but once a-year, unless
It be to you, sir. We dined with her ladyship,
I thank his worship.
Over. His worship!
Mar. As I live, sir,
I dined with him at the great lady's table,

Simple as I stand here; and saw when she kissed him;
And would, at his request, have kissed me too:
But I was not so audacious as some youths are,
That dare do any thing, be it ne'er so absurd,
And sad after performance.
Over. Why, thou rascal,
To tell me these impossibilities!
Dine at her table! and kiss him! or thee!
Impudent varlet! Have not I myself,
To whom great countesses' doors have oft flown open,
Ten times attempted, since her husband's death,
In vain to see her, though I came—a suitor?
And yet your good solicitorship, and rogue Wellborn,
Were brought into her presence, feasted with her!
But that I know thee a dog that cannot blush,
This most incredible lie would call up one
On thy butter-milk cheeks.
Mar. Shall I not trust my eyes, sir?
Or taste? I feel her good cheer in my belly.
Over. You shall feel me, if you give not over, sirrah;
Recover your brains again, and be no more gulled
With a beggar's plot, assisted by the aids
Of serving-men and chambermaids; for, beyond these,
Thou never saw'st a woman; or I'll quit you
From my employments.
Mar. Will you credit this yet?
On my confidence of their marriage, I offered Wellborn
(I would give a crown, now, I durst say his worship) [*Aside.*
My nag, and twenty pounds.
Over. Did you so, idiot? [*Strikes him down.*
Was this the way to work him to despair,
Or rather to cross me?
Mar. Will your worship kill me?
Over. No, no; but drive the lying spirit out of you.
Mar He's gone.
Over. I have done, then. Now, forgetting
Your late imaginary feast and lady,
Know, my lord Lovell dines with me to-morrow.
Be careful nought be wanting to receive him;
And bid my daughter's women trim her up:
Though they paint her, so she catch the lord, I'll thank them.
There's a piece, for my late blows.
Mar. I must yet suffer:
But there may be a time—— [*Aside.*
Over. Do you grumble?
Mar. No, sir. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*continued.*

Enter LOVELL *and* ALLWORTH.

Lov. Walk the horses down the hill; something in private
I must impart to Allworth. [*Exeunt Servants.*
Allw. O, my lord!
What sacrifice of reverence, duty, watching,
Altho' I could put off the use of sleep,
And ever wait on your commands, to serve them;
What dangers, though in ne'er so horrid shapes,
Nay, death itself, though I should run to meet it,
Can I, and with a thankful willingness, suffer!
But still the retribution will fall short
Of your bounties showered upon me.
Lov. Loving youth,
'Till what I purpose be put into act,
Do not o'er-prize it; since you have trusted me
With your soul's nearest, nay, her dearest secret,
Rest confident, 'tis in a cabinet locked,
Treachery shall never open. I have found you
(For so much to your face I must profess;
Howe'er you guard your modesty with a blush for't,)
More zealous in your love and service to me,
Than I have been in my rewards.
Allw. Still great ones,
Above my merit.
Lov. Such your gratitude calls them:
Nor am I of that harsh and rugged temper
As some great men are taxed with, who imagine
They part from the respect due to their honours,
If they use not all such as follow them,
Without distinction of their births, like slaves.
I am not so conditioned: I can make
A fitting difference between my footboy,
And a gentleman by want compelled to serve me.
Allw. 'Tis thankfully acknowledged; you have been
More like a father to me than a master.
Pray you, pardon the comparison.
Lov. I allow it;
And give you assurance I'm pleased in it.
My carriage and demeanour to your mistress,
Fair Margaret, shall truly witness for me,
I can command my passion.
Allw. 'Tis a conquest
Few lords can boast of, when they are tempted—Oh!
Lov. Why do you sigh? can you be doubtful of me?
By that fair name I in the wars have purchased,
And all my actions hitherto untainted,
I will not be more true to mine own honour,
Than to my Allworth.
Allw. As you are the brave lord Lovell,
Your bare word only given, is an assurance
Of more validity and weight to me,
Than all the oaths, bound up with imprecations,
Which, when they would deceive, most courtiers practise;
Yet being a man—for, sure, to style you more,

Would relish of gross flattery—I am forced,
Against my confidence of your worth and virtues,
To doubt, nay, more, to fear.
Lov. So young, and jealous!
Allw. Were you to encounter with a single foe,
The victory were certain: but to stand
The charge of two such potent enemies,
At once assaulting you, as wealth and beauty,
And those two seconded with power, is odds
Too great for Hercules.
Lov. Speak your doubts and fears,
Since you will nourish them, in plainer language,
That I may understand them.
Allw. What's your will,
Though I lend arms against myself, provided
They may advantage you, must be obeyed.
My much-loved lord, were Margaret only fair,
The cannon of her more than earthly form,
Though mounted high, commanding all beneath it,
And ramm'd with bullets of her sparkling eyes,
Of all the bulwarks that defend your senses,
Could batter none, but that which guards your sight.
But, when the well-tun'd accents of her tongue
Make music to you, and, with numerous sound,
Assault your hearing, (such as Ulysses, if he
Now lived again, howe'er he stood the syrens,
Could not resist,) the combat must grow doubtful
Between your reason and rebellious passions.
Add this too: When you feel her touch, and breath,
Like a soft western wind, when it glides o'er
Arabia, creating gums and spices;
And in the van the nectar of her lips,
Which you must taste, bring the battalia on,
Well-arm'd, and strongly lined with her discourse,
And knowing manners, to give entertainment;
Hippolytus himself would leave Diana,
To follow such a Venus.
Lov. Love hath made you
Poetical, Allworth.
Allw. Grant all these beat off,
Which, if it be in man to do, you'll do it,
Mammon, in sir Giles Overreach, steps in
With heaps of ill-got gold, and so much land,
To make her more remarkable, as would tire
A falcon's wings in one day to fly over.
Oh, my good lord! these powerful aids, which would
Make a mis-shapen negro beautiful,
(Yet are but ornaments to give her lustre,
That in herself is all perfection) must
Prevail for her: I here release your trust;
'Tis happiness enough for me to serve you,
And sometimes, with chaste eyes, to look upon her.
Lov. Why, shall I swear?
Allw. O, by no means, my lord;
And wrong not so your judgment to the world,
As from your fond indulgence to a boy,
Your page, your servant, to refuse a blessing
Divers great men are rivals for.
Lov. Suspend
Your judgment till the trial. How far is it
To Overreach's house?
Allw. At the most, some half hour's riding;
You'll soon be there.
Lov. And you the sooner freed
From your jealous fears.
Allw. Oh, that I durst but hope it! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall in Sir* GILES's *House.*

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.

Over. Spare for no cost, let my dressers crack with the weight
Of curious viands.
Greedy. Store, indeed, is no sore, sir.
Over. That proverb fits your stomach, Master Greedy.
And let no plate be seen but what's pure gold,
Or such, whose workmanship exceeds the matter
That it is made of; let my choicest linen
Perfume the room; and when we wash, the water
With precious powders mix, to please my lord,
That he may, with envy, wish to bathe so ever.
Mar. 'Twill be very chargeable.
Over. Avaunt, you drudge!
Now all my laboured ends are at the stake,
Is't a time to think of thrift? Call in my daughter.
[*Exit* MARRALL.
And, master justice, since you love choice dishes,
And plenty of them———
Greedy. As I do, indeed, sir,
Almost as much as to give thanks for them——
Over. I do confer that providence, with my power
Of absolute command to have abundance,
To your best care.
Greedy. I'll punctually discharge it,
And give the best directions—[OVERREACH *retires.*]—Now am I,
In mine own conceit, a monarch; at the least
Arch-president of the boiled, the roast, the baked;
For which I will eat often, and give thanks,
When my belly's braced up like a drum, and that's pure justice. [*Exit.*
Over. It must be so. Should the foolish girl prove modest,
She may spoil all; she had it not from me,
But from her mother: I was ever forward,
As she must be, and therefore I'll prepare her.

Enter MARGARET *and* MARRALL.

Alone, and let your women wait without.
[*Exit* MARRALL.
Marg. Your pleasure, sir?
Over. Ha, this is a neat dressing!
These orient pearls, and diamonds well placed, too!
The gown affects me not; it should have been
Embroidered o'er and o'er with flowers of gold;
But these rich jewels and quaint fashion help it.
And how below? since oft the wanton eye,
The face observed, descends unto the foot,
Which being well proportioned, as yours is,
Invites as much as perfect white and red,
Though without art.
How like you your new woman, the lady Downfallen?

Marg. Well for a companion:
Not as a servant.
Over. Is she humble, Meg,
And careful, too? her ladyship forgotten?
Marg. I pity her fortune.
Over. Pity her! trample on her.
I took her up in an old tamin gown,
E'en starved for want of twopenny chops, to serve thee;
And, if I understand she but repines
To do thee any duty, though ne'er so servile,
I'll pack her to her knight, where I have lodged him,
Into the Counter; and there let them howl together.
Marg. You know your own ways: but, for me, I blush
When I command her, that was once attended
With persons not inferior to myself
In birth.
Over. In birth! Why art thou not my daughter,
The blest child of my industry and wealth?
Why, foolish girl, was't not to make thee great,
That I have run, and still pursue those ways,
That hale down curses on me, which I mind not?
Part with these humble thoughts, and apt thyself
To the noble state I labour to advance thee;
Or, by my hopes to see thee honourable,
I will adopt a stranger to my heir,
And throw thee from my care; do not provoke me.
Marg. I will not, sir; mould me which way you please.

Enter GREEDY.

Over. How, interrupted?
Greedy. 'Tis matter of importance.
The cook, sir, is self-willed, and will not learn
From my experience. There's a fawn brought in, sir,
And, for my life, I cannot make him roast it
With a Norfolk dumpling in the belly of it:
And, sir, we wise men know, without the dumpling
'Tis not worth three pence.
Over. Would it were whole in thy belly,
To stuff it out! cook it any way; prithee, leave me.
Greedy. Without order for the dumpling?
Over. Let it be dumpled
Which way thou wilt; or, tell him, I will scald him
In his own cauldron.
Greedy. I had lost my stomach,
Had I lost my mistress dumpling; I'll give thanks for't. [*Exit.*
Over. But to our business, Meg; you have heard who dines here?
Marg. I have, sir.
Over. 'Tis an honourable man;
A lord, Meg, and commands a regiment
Of soldiers; and, what's rare, is one himself;
A bold and understanding one; and to be
A lord, and a good leader, in one volume,
Is granted unto few, but such as rise up
The kingdom's glory.

Enter GREEDY.

Greedy. I'll resign my office,
If I be not better obeyed.
Over. 'Slight, art thou frantic?
Greedy. Frantic! 'twould make me frantic and stark mad,
Were I not a justice of peace and quorum, too,
Which this rebellious cook cares not a straw for;
There are a dozen of woodcocks—
Over. Make thyself
Thirteen, the baker's dozen.
Greedy. I am contented,
So they may be dressed to my mind: he has found out
A new device for sauce, and will not dish them
With toasts and butter: my father was a tailor,
And my name, though a justice, Greedy Woodcock;
And, ere I'll see my lineage so abused,
I'll give up my commission.
Over. Cook, rogue, obey him.
I have given the word; pray you, now, remove yourself
To a collar of brawn, and trouble me no farther.
Greedy. I will, and meditate what to eat at dinner. [*Exit* GREEDY.
Over. And, as I said, Meg, when this gull disturbed us,
This honourable lord, this colonel,
I would have thy husband.
Marg. There's too much disparity
Between his quality and mine to hope it.
Over. I more than hope, and doubt not to effect it.
Be thou no enemy to thyself; my wealth
Shall weigh his titles down, and make you equals.
Now for the means to assure him thine, observe me;
Remember he's a courtier and a soldier,
And not to be trifled with; and therefore, when
He comes to woo you, see you do not coy it.
This mincing modesty hath spoiled many a match
By a first refusal, in vain after hoped for.
Marg. You'll have me, sir, preserve the distance that
Confines a virgin?
Over. Virgin me no virgins!
I must have you lose that name, or you lose me.
I will have you private; start not, I say private;
If you are my true daughter, not a bastard,
Thou wilt venture alone with one man, though he came[m]
Like Jupiter to Semele, and come off too.
And therefore, when he kisses you, kiss close.
Marg. I have heard this is the strumpet's fashion, sir,
Which I must never learn.
Over. Learn any thing,
And from any creature, that may make thee great;
From the devil himself.
Marg. This is but devilish doctrine!
Over. Or if his blood grow hot, suppose he offer

Beyond this, do not stay till it cool,
But meet his ardour; if a couch be near,
Sit down on't, and invite him.
Marg. In your house,
Your own house, sir! for heaven's sake, what are you then?
Or what shall I be, sir?
Over. Stand not on form;
Words are no substances.
Marg. Though you could dispense
With your own honour, cast aside religion,
The hopes of heaven, or fear of hell; excuse me,
In worldly policy this is not the way
To make me his wife; his whore, I grant, it may do.
My maiden honour so soon yielded up,
Nay prostituted, cannot but assure him,
I, that am light to him, will not hold weight
Whene'er tempted by others; so, in judgment,
When to his will I have given up my honour,
He must and will forsake me.
Over. How! forsake thee?
Do I wear a sword for fashion? or is this arm
Shrunk up, or withered? does there live a man
Of that large list I have encountered with,
Can truly say I e'er gave inch of ground,
Not purchased with his blood, that did oppose me?
Forsake thee when the thing is done! he dares not.
Give me but proof he has enjoyed thy person,
Though all his captains, echoes to his will,
Stood armed by his side to justify the wrong,
And he himself in the head of his bold troop,
Spite of his lordship, and his colonelship,
Or the judge's favour, I will make him render
A bloody and a strict account, and force him,
By marrying thee, to cure thy wounded honour!
I have said it.

Enter MARRALL.

Mar. Sir, the man of honour's come,
Newly alighted.
Over. In, without reply,
And do as I command, or thou art lost.
[*Exit* MARG.
Is the loud music I gave order for,
Ready to receive him?
Mar. 'Tis, sir.
Over. Let them sound
A princely welcome——[*Exit* MARRALL.]——Roughness awhile leave me;
For fawning, now, a stranger to my nature,
Must make way for me. [*Loud music.*

Enter LOVELL, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.

Lov. Sir, you meet your trouble.
Over. What you are pleased to style so, is an honour
Above my worth and fortunes.
Allw. Strange! so humble!

Enter GREEDY.

Over. A justice of peace, my lord.
[*Presents* GREEDY *to him.*
Lov. Your hand, good sir.
Greedy. This is a lord; and some think this a favour;
But I had rather have my hand in my dumpling.
[*Aside.*
Over. Room for my lord.
Lov. I miss, sir, your fair daughter
To crown my welcome.
Over. May it please my lord
To taste a glass of Greek wine first, and suddenly
She shall attend my lord.
Lov. You'll be obeyed, sir.
[*Exeunt omnes, præter* OVER.
Over. 'Tis to my wish; as soon as come, ask for her!
Why, Meg! Meg Overreach!

Enter MARGARET.

How! tears in your eyes?
Hah! dry them quickly, or I'll dig them out.
Is this a time to whimper? Meet that greatness
That flies into thy bosom; think what 'tis
For me to say, my honourable daughter:
And thou, when I stand bare, to say, put on,
Or, father, you forget yourself.
No more, but be instructed, or expect——
He comes.

Enter LOVELL, GREEDY, MARRALL, *and* ALLWORTH.

A black-browed girl, my lord.
Lov. As I live, a rare one!
Allw. He's ta'en already: I am lost.
Over. That kiss
Came twanging off; I like it; quit the room.
[*Exeunt* ALLWORTH, MARRALL, *and* GREEDY.]
A little bashful, my good lord; but you,
I hope, will teach her boldness.
Lov. I am happy
In such a scholar: but——
Over. I am past learning,
And therefore leave you to yourselves; remember.—— [*Exit* OVER.
Lov. You see, fair lady, your father is solicitous
To have you change the barren name of virgin
Into a hopeful wife.
Marg. His haste, my lord,
Holds no power o'er my will
Lov. But o'er your duty——
Marg. Which, forced too much, may break.
Lov. Bend, rather, sweetest:
Think of your years.
Marg. Too few to match with yours:
And choicest fruits, too soon plucked, rot and wither.
Lov. Do you think I am old?
Marg. I am sure I am too young.
Lov. I can advance you.
Marg. To a hill of sorrow;
Where every hour I may expect to fall,
But never hope firm footing. You are noble;
I of a low descent, however rich; and tissues matched
With scarlet suit but ill.

O my good lord, I could say more, but that
I dare not trust these walls.
Lov. Pray you, trust my ear then.

Enter OVERREACH, *listening.*

Over. Close at it! whispering! this is excellent!
And, by their postures, a consent on both parts.

Enter GREEDY.

Greedy. Sir Giles! Sir Giles!
Over. The great fiend stop that clapper!
Greedy. It must ring out, sir, when my belly rings noon.
The baked meats are run out, the roast turned powder.
Over. I shall powder you.
Greedy. Beat me to dust, I care not;
In such a cause as this, I'll die a martyr.
Over. Marry, and shall, you barathrum of the shambles! [*Strikes him.*
Greedy. How! strike a justice of peace! 'tis petty treason,
Edwardi quinto: but that you are my friend,
I could commit you, without bail or mainprize.
Over. Leave your bawling, sir, or I shall commit you
Where you shall not dine to-day: disturb my lord,
When he is in discourse!
Greedy. Is't a time to talk
When we should be munching?
Lov. Hah! I heard some noise!
Over. Mum, villain; vanish! shall we break a bargain
Almost made up? [*Thrusts* GREEDY *off.*
Lov. Lady, I understand you:
And rest most happy in your choice. Believe it,
I'll be a careful pilot to direct
Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.
Marg. So shall your honour save two lives, and bind us
Your slaves for ever.
Lov. I am in the act rewarded,
Since it is good; howe'er you must put on
An amorous carriage towards me, to delude
Your subtile father.
Marg. I am prone to that.
Lov. Now break off our conference. Sir Giles!
Where is sir Giles?

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.

Over. My noble lord! and how
Does your lordship find her?
Lov. Apt, sir Giles, and coming,
And I like her the better.
Over. So do I, too.
Lov. Yet, should we take forts at the first assault,
'Twere poor in the defendant. I must confirm her
With a love-letter or two, which I must have
Delivered by my page, and you give way to it.
Over. With all my soul. A towardly gentleman!
Your hand, good Mr Allworth; know my house
Is ever open to you.
Allw. 'Twas shut till now. [*Aside.*
Over. Well done, well done, my honourable daughter!
Thou art so already: know this gentle youth,
And cherish him, my honourable daughter.
Marg. I shall, with my best care.
[*Noise of a coach.*
Over. A coach?
Greedy. More stops
Before we go to dinner! O my guts!

Enter Lady and WELLBORN.

Lady. If I find welcome,
You share in it; if not, I'll back again,
Now I know your ends; for I come armed for all
Can be objected.
Lov. How! the lady Allworth?
Over. And thus attended!
Mar. No, I am a dolt;
The spirit of lies hath entered me.
[LOVELL *salutes the Lady, who salutes* MARGARET.
Over. Peace, patch!
'Tis more than wonder, an astonishment
That does possess me wholly.
Lov. Noble lady,
This is a favour to prevent my visit,
The service of my life can never equal
Lady. My lord, I laid wait for you, and much hoped
You would have made my poor house your first inn:
And, therefore, doubting that you might forget me,
Or too long dwell here, having such ample cause,
In this unequalled beauty, for your stay;
And fearing to trust any but myself
With the relation of my service to you,
I borrowed so much from my long restraint,
And took the air in person to invite you.
Lov. Your bounties are so great, they rob me, madam,
Of words to give you thanks.
Lady. Good sir Giles Overreach!
[*Salutes him.*
How dost thou, Marrall? Liked you my meat so ill,
You'll dine no more with me?
Greedy. I will when you please,
And it like your ladyship.
Lady. When you please, Master Greedy;
If meat can do it, you shall be satisfied:
And now, my lord, pray take into your knowledge
This gentleman; howe'er his outside's coarse,
[*Presents* WELLBORN.
His inward linings are as fine and fair
As any man's. Wonder not I speak at large:
And howsoe'er his humour carries him
To be thus accoutred; or what taint soe'er
For his wild life have stuck upon his fame;

He may, ere long, with boldness, rank himself
With some that have condemned him. Sir Giles Overreach,
If I am welcome, bid him so.
Over. My nephew!
He hath been too long a stranger: 'faith you have,
Pray, let it be mended.
[LOVELL *conferring with* WELLBORN.
Mar. Why, sir, what do you mean?
This is rogue Wellborn, monster, prodigy,
That should hang, or drown himself; no man of worship,
Much less your nephew.
Over. Well, sirrah, we shall reckon
For this hereafter.
Mar. I'll not lose my jeer,
Though I be beaten dead for it
Well. Let my silence plead
In my excuse, my lord, till better leisure
Offer itself to hear a full relation
Of my poor fortunes.
Lov. I would hear and help them. [*Bell rings.*
Over. Your dinner waits you.
Lov. Pray you lead, we follow.
Lady. Nay, you are my guest; come, dear Mr Wellborn. [*Exeunt. Manet* GREEDY.
Greedy. Dear Mr Wellborn! so she said; Heaven! Heaven!
If my belly would give me leave, I could ruminate
All day on this: I have granted twenty warrants
To have him committed, from all prisons in the shire,
To Nottingham jail! and now, dear Mr Wellborn!
And my good nephew! But I play the fool
To stand here prating, and forget my dinner.

Enter MARRALL.

Are they set, Marrall?
Mar. Long since; pray you, a word, sir.
Greedy. No wording now.
Mar. In troth, I must: my master,
Knowing you are his good friend, makes bold with you,
And does entreat you, more guests being come in
Than he expected, especially his nephew,
The table being full too, you would excuse him,
And sup with him on the cold meat.
Greedy. How! no dinner,
After all my care?
Mar. 'Tis but a penance for
A meal; besides, you broke your fast.
Greedy. That was
But a bit to stay my stomach. A man in commission
Give place to a tatterdemallion!
Mar. No bug words, sir;
Should his worship hear you——
Greedy. Lose my dumpling too?
And buttered toasts and woodcocks?
Mar. Come, have patience;
If you will dispense a little with your worship,
And sit with the waiting-women, you'll have dumpling,
Woodcock, and buttered toasts, too.
Greedy. This revives me:
I will gorge there sufficiently.
Mar. This is the way, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter OVERREACH, *as from dinner.*

Over. She's caught! O woman! she neglects my lord,
And all her compliments applied to Wellborn!
The garments of her widowhood laid by,
She now appears as glorious as the spring.
Her eyes fixed on him, in the wine she drinks,
He being her pledge, she sends him burning kisses,
And sits on thorns till she be private with him.
She leaves my meat to feed upon his looks;
And, if in our discourse he be but named,
From her a deep sigh follows. But why grieve I
At this? It makes for me; if she prove his,
All that is hers is mine, as I will work him.

Enter MARRALL.

Mar. Sir, the whole board is troubled at your rising.
Over. No matter, I'll excuse it: prithee, Marrall,
Watch an occasion to invite my nephew
To speak with me in private.
Mar. Who? the rogue,
The lady scorned to look on?
Over. You are a wag.

Enter Lady and WELLBORN.

Mar. See, sir, she's come, and cannot be without him.
Lady. With your favour, sir, after a plenteous dinner,
I shall make bold to walk a turn or two
In your rare garden.
Over. There's an arbour, too,
If your ladyship please to use it.
Lady. Come, Mr Wellborn.
[*Exeunt Lady and* WELL.
Over. Grosser and grosser!—now I believe the poet
Feign'd not, but was historical, when he wrote
Pasiphaë was enamoured of a bull:
This lady's lust's more monstrous. My good lord,
Excuse my manners.

Enter LOVELL, MARGARET, *and* ALLWORTH.

Lov. There needs none, Sir Giles;
I may, ere long, say father, when it pleases
My dearest mistress to give warrant to it.
Over. She shall seal to it, my lord, and make me happy.
Marg. My lady is returned.

Enter WELLBORN *and Lady.*

Lady. Provide my coach,
I'll instantly away: my thanks, sir Giles,
For my entertainment.
Over. 'Tis your nobleness
To think it such.
Lady. I must do you a farther wrong,
In taking away your honourable guest.

Lov. I wait on you, madam: farewell, good sir Giles.
Lady. Good Mrs Margaret;
Nay, come, Mr Wellborn,
I must not leave you behind, in sooth, I must not.
Over. Rob me not, madam, of all joys at once;
Let my nephew stay behind: he shall have my coach,
And, after some small conference between us,
Soon overtake your ladyship.
Lady. Stay not long, sir.
Lov. This parting kiss. You shall every day hear from me,
By my faithful page. [*To* MARGARET.
Allw. 'Tis a service I am proud of.
[*Exeunt* LOVELL, *Lady*, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.
Over. Daughter, to your chamber. [*Exit* MARGARET.
You may wonder, nephew,
After so long an enmity between us,
I shall desire your friendship.
Well. So I do, sir;
'Tis strange to me.
Over. But I'll make it no wonder;
And, what is more, unfold my nature to you.
We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift them up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads, to press them to the bottom;
As, I must yield, with you I practised it:
But now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you. This rich lady
(And I am glad of it) is enamoured of you;
'Tis too apparent, nephew.
Well. No such thing:
Compassion rather, sir.
Over. Well, in a word,
Because your stay is short, I'll have you seen
No more in this base shape; nor shall she say,
She married you like a beggar, or in debt.
Well. He'll run into the noose, and save my labour. [*Aside.*
Over. You have a trunk of rich clothes, not far hence,
In pawn; I will redeem them: and, that no clamour
May taint your credit for your petty debts,
You shall have a thousand pounds to cut them off,
And go a freeman to the wealthy lady.
Well. This done, sir, out of love, and no ends else——
Over. As it is, nephew.
Well. Binds me still your servant.
Over. No compliments: you are staid for:—ere you've supped,
You shall hear from me. My coach, knaves, for my nephew!
To-morrow I will visit you.
Well. Here's an uncle
In a man's extremes! how much they do belie you,
That say you are hard-hearted!
Over. My deeds, nephew,
Shall speak my love; what men report, I weigh not. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Lady* ALLWORTH'S *House.*

LOVELL *and* ALLWORTH *discovered.*

Lov. 'Tis well. Give me my cloak: I now discharge you
From farther service. Mind your own affairs;
I hope they will prove successful.
Allw. What is blest
With your good wish, my lord, cannot but prosper.
Let after times report, and to your honour,
How much I stand engaged; for I want language
To speak my debt: yet if a tear or two
Of joy, for your much goodness, can supply
My tongue's defects, I could——
Lov. Nay, do not melt:
This ceremonial of thanks to me is superfluous.
Over. [*Within.*] Is my lord stirring?
Lov. 'Tis he! Oh, here's your letter! let him in.

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.

Over. A good day to my lord.
Lov. You are an early riser,
Sir Giles.
Over. And reason, to attend your lordship.
Lov. And you too, Mr Greedy, up so soon?
Greedy. In troth, my lord, after the sun is up
I cannot sleep; for I have a foolish stomach,
That croaks for breakfast. With your lordship's favour,
I have a serious question to demand
Of my worthy friend sir Giles.
Lov. Pray you use your pleasure.
Greedy. How far, sir Giles—and, pray you answer me
Upon your credit—hold you it to be
From your manor-house to this of my lady Allworth's?
Over. Why, some four miles.
Greedy. How! four miles, good Sir Giles?
Upon your reputation think better;
For, if you do abate but one half quarter
Of five, you do yourself the greatest wrong
That can be in the world; for four miles riding
Could not have raised so huge an appetite
As I feel gnawing on me.
Mar. Whether you ride,

Or go a-foot, you are that way still provided,
And it please your worship.
Over. How now, sirrah! prating
Before my lord? no deference? Go to my nephew:
See all his debts discharged, and help his worship
To fit on his rich suit.
Mar. I may fit you too.
Toss'd like a dog still! [*Exit* MARRALL.
Lov. I have writ this morning
A few lines to my mistress, your fair daughter.
Over. 'Twill fire her, for she's wholly yours already.
Sweet Master Allworth, take my ring; 'twill carry
To her presence, I dare warrant you; and there plead
For my good lord, if you shall find occasion.
That done, pray ride to Nottingham; get a licence,
Still by this token. I'll have it dispatched,
And suddenly, my lord, that I may say
My honourable, nay, right honourable daughter.
Greedy. Take my advice, young gentleman; get your breakfast.
'Tis unwholesome to ride fasting. I'll eat with you,
And eat to purpose.
Over. Some fury's in that gut:
Hungry again? Did you not devour, this morning,
A shield of brawn, and a barrel of Colchester oysters?
Greedy. Why, that was, sir, only to scour my stomach,
A kind of preparative. Come, gentlemen,
I will not have you feed, like the hangman of Flushing,
Alone, while I am here.
Lov. Haste your return.
Allw. I will not fail, my lord.
Greedy. Nor I, to line
My Christmas coffer.
[*Exeunt* GREEDY *and* ALLWORTH.
Over. To my wish, we're private.
I come not to make offer with my daughter
A certain portion; that were poor and trivial:
In one word, I pronounce all that is mine,
In lands, or leases, ready coin, or goods,
With her, my lord, comes to you; nor shall you have
One motive to induce you to believe
I live too long, since every year I'll add
Something unto the heap, which shall be yours too.
Lov. You are a right kind father.
Over. You shall have reason
To think me such. How do you like this seat?
It is well wooded and well watered, the acres
Fertile and rich; would it not serve for change
To entertain your friends in a summer's progress?
What thinks my noble lord?
Lov. 'Tis a wholesome air,
And well-built pile; and she, that's mistress of it,
Worthy the large revenue.
Over. She the mistress?
It may be so for a time; but let my lord
Say only, that he but like it, and would have it,
I say, ere long, 'tis his.
Lov. Impossible.
Over. You do conclude too fast, not knowing me,
Nor the engines that I work by. 'Tis not alone
The lady Allworth's lands; for those, once Well-born's,
(As, by her dotage on him, I know they will be)
Shall soon be mine; but point out any man's
In all the shire, and say they lie convenient
And useful for your lordship, and once more
I say aloud, they are yours.
Lov. I dare not own
What's by unjust and cruel means extorted:
My fame and credit are more dear to me,
Than so to expose them to be censured by
The public voice.
Over. You run, my lord, no hazard;
Your reputation shall stand as fair,
In all good mens' opinions, as now:
Nor can my actions, though condemned for ill,
Cast any foul aspersion upon yours.
For though I do contemn report myself,
As a mere sound, I still will be so tender
Of what concerns you in all points of honour,
That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,
Nor your unquestioned integrity,
Shall ere be sullied with one taint or spot,
That may take from your innocence and candour.
All my ambition is, to have my daughter
Right honourable; which my lord can make her:
And might I live to dance upon my knee
A young lord Lovell, born by her unto you,
I write *nil ultra* to my proudest hopes.
As for possessions, and annual rents,
Equivalent to maintain you in the port
Your noble birth and present state require,
I do remove that burden from your shoulders,
And take it on mine own; for though I ruin
The country, to supply your riotous waste,
The scourge of prodigals, want, shall never find you.
Lov. Are you not moved with the imprecations
And curses of whole families, made wretched
By these practices?
Over. Yes, as rocks are,
When foamy billows split themselves against
Their flinty ribs; or as the moon is moved,
When wolves, with hunger pined, bowl at her brightness.
I am of a solid temper, and, like these,
Steer on a constant course: with mine own sword,
If called into the field, I can make that right,
Which fearful enemies murmured at as wrong.
Now, for those other piddling complaints,
Breathed out in bitterness; as when they call me
Extortioner, tyrant, cormorant, or intruder
On my poor neighbour's right, or grand incloser
Of what was common, to my private use;
Nay, when my ears are pierc'd with widows' cries,
And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,
I only think what 'tis to have my daughter

Right honourable; and 'tis a powerful charm
Makes me insensible of remorse, or pity,
Or the least sting of conscience.
Lov. I admire
The toughness of your nature.
Over. 'Tis for you,
My lord, and for my daughter, I am marble;
Nay, more, if you will have my character
In little, I enjoy more true delight
In my arrival to my wealth these dark
And crooked ways, than you shall e'er take pleasure
In spending what my industry hath compassed.
My haste commands me hence: in one word, therefore,
Is it a match, my lord?
Lov. I hope that is past doubt, now.
Over. Then rest secure; not the hate of all mankind here,
Not fear of what can fall on me hereafter,
Shall make me study aught but your advancement
One story higher: an earl! if gold can do it.
Dispute not my religion, nor my faith,
Though I am borne thus headlong by my will;
You may make choice of what belief you please;
To me they are equal. So, my lord, good morrow. [*Exit.*
Lov. He's gone; I wonder how the earth can bear
Such a portent! I, that have lived a soldier,
And stood the enemy's violent charge undaunted,
To hear this horrid beast, I'm bathed all over
In a cold sweat; yet, like a mountain, he
Is no more shaken than Olympus is,
When angry Boreas loads his double head
With sudden drifts of snow.

Enter Lady, Waiting-woman, and AMBLE.

Lady. Save you, my lord!
Disturb I not your privacy?
Lov. No, good madam;
For your own sake I am glad you came no sooner,
Since this bold, bad man, sir Giles Overreach,
Made such a plain discovery of himself,
And read this morning such devilish matins,
That I should think it a sin, next to his,
But to repeat it——
Lady. I ne'er pressed, my lord,
On other's privacies; yet, against my will,
Walking, for health's sake, in the gallery
Adjoining to your lodgings, I was made
(So loud and vehement he was) partaker
Of his tempting offers.
Lov. Please you to command
Your servants hence, and I shall gladly hear
Your wiser counsel.
Lady. 'Tis, my lord, a woman's,
But true and hearty;—wait in the next room,
But be within call; yet not so near to force me
To whisper my intents.
Amb. We are taught better,
By you, good madam.
Wom. And well know our distance.
Lady. Do so, and talk not; 'twill become your breeding. [*Exeunt* AMBLE *and Wom.*

Now, my good lord, if I may use my freedom,
As to an honoured friend——
Lov. You lessen else
Your favour to me.
Lady. I dare, then, say thus: as you are noble,
(However common men
Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
Of their industrious aims) 'twill not agree
With those of eminent blood, who are engaged
More to prefer their honours, than to increase
The state left to them by their ancestors,
To study large additions to their fortunes,
And quite neglect their births:—though I must grant,
Riches, well got, to be a useful servant,
But a bad master.
Lov. Madam, 'tis confessed;
But what infer you from it?
Lady. This, my lord;
That as all wrongs, though thrust into one scale,
Slide of themselves off, when right fills the other,
And cannot bide the trial; so all wealth,
I mean, if ill acquired, cemented to honour
By virtuous ways achieved, and bravely purchased,
Is but as rubbish poured into a river,
(Howe'er intended to make good the bank,)
Rendering the water that was pure before
Polluted and unwholesome. I allow
The heir of sir Giles Overreach, Margaret,
A maid well qualified, and the richest match
Our north part can make boast of; yet she cannot,
With all that she brings with her, fill their mouths,
That never will forget who was her father;
Or that my husband Allworth's lands, and Wellborn's,
(How wrung from both needs no repetition)
Were real motives, that more worked your lordship
To join your families, than her form and virtues.
You may conceive the rest.
Lov. I do, sweet madam;
And long since have considered it. I know
The sum of all that makes a just man happy
Consists in the well choosing of his wife:
And there, well to discharge it, does require
Equality of years, of birth, of fortune;
For beauty being poor, and not cried up
By birth or wealth, can truly mix with neither;
And wealth, where there's such difference in years,
And fair descent, must make the yoke uneasy:—
But I come nearer.
Lady. Pray you do, my lord.
Lov. Were Overreach's states thrice centupled, his daughter
Millions of degrees much fairer than she is,
Howe'er I might urge precedents to excuse me,
I would not so adulterate my blood,
By marrying Margaret, and so leave my issue
Made up of several pieces, one part scarlet
And the other London blue. In my own tomb
I will inter my name first.
Lady. I am glad to hear this. [*Aside.*
Why then, my lord, pretend you marriage to her?

Dissimulation but ties false knots
On that straight line, by which you hitherto
Have measured all your actions.
Lov. I make answer,
And aptly, with a question. Wherefore have you,
That, since your husband's death, have lived a strict
And chaste nun's life, on the sudden given yourself
To visits and entertainments? Think you, madam,
'Tis not grown public conference? or the favours,
Which you too prodigally have thrown on Wellborn,
Incur not censure?
Lady. I am innocent here, and, on my life, I swear
My ends are good.
Lov. On my soul, so are mine
To Margaret; but leave both to the event:
And since this friendly privacy doth serve
But as an offered means unto ourselves
To search each other farther, you have shewn
Your care of me, I, my respect to you;
Deny me not, but still in chaste words, madam,
An afternoon's discourse.
Lady. So I shall hear you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Landscape.*

Enter TAPWELL *and* FROTH.

Tap. Undone! undone! this was your counsel, Froth.
Froth. Mine! I defy thee: did not Master Marrall
(He has marred all, I am sure) strictly command us
(On pain of Sir Giles Overreach's displeasure)
To turn the gentleman out of doors?
Tap. 'Tis true;
But now he's his uncle's darling, and has got
Master Justice Greedy (since he filled his belly)
At his commandment to do any thing;
Woe, woe, to us!
Froth. He may prove merciful.
Tap. Troth, we do not deserve it at his hands:
Though he knew all the passages of our house,
As the receiving of stolen goods,
When he was rogue Wellborn, no man would believe him,
And then his information could not hurt us;
But now he is right worshipful again,
Who dares but doubt his testimony? Methinks
I see thee, Froth, already in a cart,
For a close bawd, thine eyes even pelted out
With dirt and rotten eggs;
And my hand hissing (if I 'scape the halter)
With the letter R printed upon it.
Froth. Would that were the worst!
That were but nine days wonder: as for credit,
We have none to lose; but we shall lose the money
He owes us, and his custom; there's the hell on't.
Tap. He has summoned all his creditors by the drum,
And they swarm about him like so many soldiers
On the pay day; and has found such a NEW WAY
TO PAY HIS OLD DEBTS, as, 'tis very likely,
He shall be chronicled for it.
Froth. He deserves it
More than ten pageants. But are you sure his worship
Comes this way to my lady's?
[*A cry within,—Brave Master* WELLBORN!
Tap. Yes:—I hear him.
Froth. Be ready with your petition, and present it
To his grace.

Enter WELLBORN, *in a rich Habit*, GREEDY, MARRALL, AMBLE, ORDER, FURNACE, *and three Creditors;* TAPWELL *kneeling, delivers his Petition.*

Well. How's this? petitioned too!
But note what miracles the payment of
A little trash, and a rich suit of clothes,
Can work upon these rascals! I shall be,
I think, prince Wellborn.
Mar. When your worship's married,
You may be:——I know not what I hope to see you.
Well. Then look thou for advancement.
Mar. To be known
Your worship's bailiff, is the mark I shoot at.
Well. And thou shalt hit it.
Mar. Pray you, sir, dispatch
These needy followers, and for my admittance,
[*In this interim,* TAPWELL *and* FROTH *flattering and bribing Justice* GREEDY.]
(Provided you'll defend me from Sir Giles,
Whose service I am weary of) I'll say something
You shall give thanks for.
Well. Fear me not, Sir Giles.
Greedy. Who, Tapwell? I remember thy wife brought me,
Last new year's tide, a couple of fat turkies.
Tap. And shall do every Christmas, let your worship
But stand my friend now.
Greedy. How! with Master Wellborn?
I can do any thing with him on such terms.—
See you this honest couple? they are good souls
As ever drew out spigot; have they not
A pair of honest faces?
Well. I o'erheard you,
And the bribe he promised: you are cozened in them;
For of all the scum, that grew rich by my riots,
This, for a most unthankful knave, and this,
For a base bawd and whore, have worst deserved;
And, therefore, speak not for them. By your place,
You are rather to do me justice; lend me your ear:
Forget his turkies, and call in his licence,
And, at the next fair, I'll give you a yoke of oxen
Worth all his poultry.

Greedy. I am changed on the sudden,
In my opinion——Come near,——
Come nearer, rascal!
And now I view him better, did you e'er see
One look so like an arch-knave? his very countenance,
Should an understanding judge but look on him,
Would hang him though he were innocent.
Tap. & Froth. Worshipful sir!
Greedy. No; though the great Turk came instead of turkies,
To beg my favour, I am inexorable:
Thou hast an ill name; for, except thy musty ale,
That hath destroyed many of the king's liege people,
Thou never had'st in thy house, to stay men's stomachs,
A piece of Suffolk cheese, or gammon of bacon,
Or any esculent, as the learned call it,
For their emolument, but sheer drink only.
For which gross fault, I here do damn thy licence,
Forbidding thee ever to tap or draw;
For instantly I will, in mine own person,
Command the constable to pull down thy sign;
And do it before I eat.
Froth. No mercy?
Greedy. Vanish.
If I shew any, may my promised oxen gore me!
Tap. Unthankful knaves are ever so rewarded.
[*Exeunt* GREEDY, TAPWELL, *and* FROTH.
Well. Speak; what are you?
1 *Cred.* A decayed vintner, sir,
That might have thrived, but that your worship broke me,
With trusting you with muscadine and eggs,
And five pound suppers, with your after-drinkings,
When you lodged upon the Bankside.
Well. I remember.
1 *Cred.* I have not been hasty, nor e'er laid to arrest you;
And therefore, sir——
Well. Thou art an honest fellow:
I'll set you up again—see his bill paid.
What are you?
2 *Cred.* A taylor once, but now mere botcher.
I gave you credit for a suit of clothes,
Which was all my stock; but you failing in payment,
I was removed from the shop-board, and confined
Under a stall.
Well. See him paid—and botch no more.
2 *Cred.* I ask no interest, sir.
Well. Such taylors need not;
If their bills are paid in one-and-twenty years,
They are seldom losers.—O, I know thy face;
Thou wert my surgeon; you must tell no tales;
Those days are done; I will pay you in private.
Ord. A royal gentleman!
Furn. Royal as an emperor!
He'll prove a brave master; my good lady knew
To choose a man.
Well. See all men else discharged;
And, since old debts are cleared by a new way,
A little bounty will not misbecome me:
There is something, honest cook, for thy good breakfasts,
And this, for your respect; take it; 'tis good gold,
And I am able to spare it.
Ord. You are too munificent.
Furn. He was ever so.
Well. Pray you, on before.
3 *Cred.* Heaven bless you!
Mar. At four o'clock the rest know where to meet me.
[*Exeunt* ORDER, FURNACE, AMBLE *and Creditors.*
Well. Now, Master Marrall, what's the weighty secret
You promised to impart?
Mar. Sir, time nor place
Allow me to relate each circumstance;
This, only, in a word: I know Sir Giles
Will come upon you for security
For his thousand pounds; which you must not consent to.
As he grows in heat (as I am sure he will)
Be you but rough, and say, he's in your debt
Ten times the sum upon sale of your land:
I had a hand in't, (I speak it to my shame)
When you were defeated of it.
Well. That's forgiven.
Mar. I shall deserve it: Then urge him to produce
The deed in which you passed it over to him,
Which I know he'll have about him to deliver
To the lord Lovell, with many other writings,
And present monies.——I'll instruct you farther,
As I wait on your worship. If I play not my part
To your full content, and your uncle's much vexation,
Hang up Jack Marrall.
Well. I rely upon thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Chamber in* SIR GILES's *House.*

Enter ALLWORTH *and* MARGARET.

All. Whether to yield the first praise to my lord's
Unequalled temperance, or your constant sweetness,
That I yet live, my weak hands fast'ned on
Hope's anchor, spite of all storms of despair,
I yet rest doubtful.
Marg. Give it to lord Lovell;
For what in him was bounty, in me is duty.
I make but payment of a debt, to which
My vows, in that high office registered,
Are faithful witnesses.
All. 'Tis true, my dearest;
Yet, when I call to mind, how many fair ones
Make wilful shipwreck of their faiths and oaths
To God and man, to fill the arms of greatness;
And you rise up no less than a glorious star,

To the amazement of the world,——that hold out
Against the stern authority of a father,
And spurn at honour when it comes to court you;
I am so tender of your good, that faintly,
With your wrong, I can wish myself that right
You yet are pleased to do me.
Marg. Yet, and ever.
To me what's title, when content is wanting?
Or wealth raked up together with much care,
And to be kept with more, when the heart pines,
In being dispossess'd of what it longs for
Beyond the Indian mines? or the smooth brow
Of a pleased sire, that slaves me to his will;
And, so his ravenous humour may be feasted
By my obedience, and he see me great,
Leaves to my soul nor faculties nor power
To make her own election?
All. But the dangers,
That follow the repulse!
Marg. To me they are nothing:
Let Allworth love, I cannot be unhappy.
Suppose the worst; that, in his rage, he kill me;
A tear or two by you dropt on my hearse,
In sorrow for my fate, will call back life,
So far as but to say, that I die yours;
I then shall rest in peace: or, should he prove
So cruel, as one death would not suffice
His thirst of vengeance, but with lingering torments,
In mind and body, I must waste to air,
In poverty, joined with banishment; so you share
In my afflictions, which I dare not wish you,
So high I prize you, I could undergo them
With such a patience, as should look down
With scorn on his worst malice.
All. Heaven avert
Such trials of your true affection to me!
Nor will it unto you, that are all mercy,
Shew so much rigour. But since we must run
Such desperate hazards, let us do our best
To steer between them.
Marg. Lord Lovell is your friend;
And, though but a young actor, second me,
In doing to the life what he has plotted,

Enter OVERREACH.

The end may yet prove happy: now, my Allworth!
All. To your letter, and put on a seeming anger. [*Aside.*
Marg. I'll pay my lord all debts due to his title;
And, when with terms not taking from his honour,
He does solicit me, I shall gladly hear him:
But in this peremptory, nay, commanding way,
To appoint a meeting, and without my knowledge,
A priest to tie the knot can ne'er be undone
Till death unloose it, is a confidence
In his lordship, that will deceive him.
All. I hope better, good lady.
Marg. Hope, sir, what you please: for me,
I must take a safe and secure course; I have
A father, and, without his full consent,
Though all lords of the land kneeled for my favour,
I can grant nothing.
Over. I like this obedience.
But whatsoever my lord writes, must, and shall be
Accepted and embraced—[*Aside.*]—Sweet Master Allworth,
You shew yourself a true and faithful servant
To your good lord; he has a jewel of you.
How! frowning, Meg! are these looks to receive
A messenger from my lord? What's this? give me it.
Marg. A piece of arrogant paper, like the inscription.
[OVER. *reads the letter.*
'Fair mistress, from your servant learn, all joys
'That we can hope for, if deferred, prove toys;
'Therefore, this instant, and in private, meet
'A husband, that will gladly, at your feet,
'Lay down his honours, tendering them to you
'With all content, the church being paid her due.'
Over. Is this the arrogant piece of paper? fool!
Will you still be one? In the name of madness, what
Could his good honour write more to content you?
Is there aught else to be wished after these two,
That are already offered? Marriage first,
And lawful pleasure after: What would you more?
Marg. Why, sir, I would be married like your daughter,
Not hurried away in the night, I know not whither,
Without all ceremony; no friends invited,
To honour the solemnity.
All. An't please your honour,
(For so before to-morrow I must style you)
My lord desires this privacy, in respect
His honourable kinsmen are far off;
And his desires to have it done, brook not
So long delay as to expect their coming:
And yet he stands resolved, with all due pomp,
As running at the ring, plays, masks, and tilting,
To have his marriage at court celebrated,
When he has brought your honour up to London.
Over. He tells you true; 'tis the fashion, on my knowledge:
Yet the good lord, to please your peevishness,
Must put it off, forsooth, and lose a night,
In which, perhaps, he might get two boys on thee.
Tempt me no farther; if you do, this goad
Shall prick you to him.
Marg. I could be contented,
Were you but by to do a father's part,
And give me in the church.
Over. So my lord have you,
What do I care who gives you? since my lord
Does propose to be private, I'll not cross him.
I know not, Master Allworth, how my lord

May be provided; and therefore, there's a purse
Of gold: 'twill serve this night's expence: to-morrow
I'll furnish him with any sums. In the mean time,
Use my ring to my chaplain; he is beneficed
At my manor of Gotham, and called parson Welldo:
'Tis no matter for a licence; I'll bear him out in't.
Marg. With your favour, sir, what warrant is your ring?
He may suppose I got that twenty ways
Without your knowledge; and, then, to be refused,
Were such a stain upon me—if you please, sir,
Your presence would do better.
Over. Still perverse!
I say again, I will not cross my lord,
Yet I'll prevent you, too—Paper and ink there.
All. I can furnish you.
Over. I thank you; I can write, then. [*Writes on his book.*
All. You may, if you please, leave out the name of my lord,
In respect he comes disguised, and only write,—
Marry her to this gentleman.
Over. Well advised. [MARG. *kneels.*
'Tis done; away—my blessing, girl? thou hast it.
Nay, no reply—be gone, good Master Allworth;
This shall be the best night's work you ever made.
All. I hope so, sir. [*Exeunt* ALL. *and* MARG.
Over. Farewell! Now all's cock sure.
Methinks I hear already knights and ladies
Say, Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your honourable daughter? has her honour
Slept well to-night? or, will her honour please
To accept this monkey, dog, or paroquet?
(This is state in ladies) or my eldest son
To be her page, and wait upon her trencher?—
My ends, my ends are compassed!—then for Wellborn
And the lands; were he once married to the widow—
I have him here—I can scarce contain myself,
I am so full of joy! nay, joy all over! [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Lady* ALLWORTH'S *House.*

Enter LOVELL *and Lady.*

Lady. By this, you know how strong the motives were,
That did, my lord, induce me to dispense
A little with my gravity, to advance
The plots and projects of the down-trod Wellborn.
Nor shall I e'er repent, although I suffer
In some few men's opinions for't, the action;
For he that ventured all for my dear husband,
Might justly claim an obligation from me,
To pay him such a courtesy; which had I
Coyly, or over-curiously denied,
It might have argued me of little love
To the deceased.
Lov. What you intended, madam,
For the poor gentleman, hath found good success;
For, as I understand, his debts are paid,
And he once more furnished for fair employment;
But all the arts that I have used to raise
The fortunes of your joy and mine, young Allworth,
Stand yet in supposition, though I hope well:
For the young lovers are in wit more pregnant
Than their years can promise; and for their desires,
On my knowledge they are equal.
Lady. As my wishes
Are with yours, my lord; yet give me leave to fear
The building, though well grounded. To deceive
Sir Giles, that's both a lion and a fox
In his proceedings, were a work beyond
The strongest undertakers; not the trial
Of two weak innocents.
Lov. Despair not, madam:
Hard things are compassed oft by easy means:
And judgment, being a gift derived from Heaven,
Though sometimes lodged i' th' hearts of worldly men,
That ne'er consider from whom they receive it,
Forsakes such as abuse the giver of it;
Which is the reason that the politic
And cunning statesman, that believes he fathoms
The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth,
Is, by simplicity, oft overreached.
Lady. May be so.
The young ones have my warmest wishes.
Lov. O, gentle lady, let them prove kind to me!
You've kindly heard—now grant my suit.
What say you, lady?
Lady. Troth, my lord,
My own unworthiness may answer for me;
For had you, when I was in my prime,
My virgin flower uncropt, presented me
With this great favour, looking on my lowness,
Not in a glass of self-love, but of truth,
I could not but have thought it as a blessing,
Far, far beyond my merit.
Lov. You are too modest,
And undervalue that which is above
My title, or whatever I call mine.
I grant, were I a Spaniard, to marry
A widow might disparage me; but being
A true-born Englishman, I cannot find
How it can taint my honour: nay, what's more,
That which you think a blemish, is to me

The fairest lustre. You already, madam,
Have given sure proofs how dearly you can cherish
A husband that deserves you; which confirms me,
That, *if* I am not wanting in my care
To do you service, you'll be still the same
That you were to your Allworth: in a word,
Our years, our states, our births, are not unequal,
You being descended nobly, and allied so.
If, then, you may be won to make me happy,
But join your hand to mine, and that shall be
A solemn contract.

Lady. I were blind to my own good,
Should I refuse it; yet, my lord, receive me
As such a one, the study of whose whole life
Shall know no other object but to please you.

Lov. If I return not, with all tenderness,
Equal respect to you, may I die wretched!

Lady. There needs no protestation, my lord,
To her that cannot doubt—You are welcome, sir.

Enter WELLBORN.

Now, you look like yourself.

Well. And will continue
Such in my free acknowledgment, that I am
Your creature, madam, and will never hold
My life mine own, when you please to command it.

Lov. It is a thankfulness that well becomes you;
You could not make choice of a better shape
To dress your mind in.

Lady. For me, I am happy
That my endeavours prospered. Saw you, of late,
Sir Giles, your uncle?

Well. I heard of him, madam,
By his minister, Marrall: he's grown into strange passions
About his daughter. This last night he looked for
Your lordship at his house; but, missing you,
And she not yet appearing, his wise head
Is much perplexed and troubled.

Lov. It may be,
Sweetheart, my project took.

Lady. I strongly hope.

Over. [*Within.*] Ha! find her, booby; thou huge lump of nothing,
I'll bore thine eyes out else.

Well. May it please your lordship,
For some ends of my own, but to withdraw
A little out of sight, though not of hearing;
You may, perhaps, have sport.

Lov. You shall direct me. [*Steps aside.*

Enter OVERREACH, *with distracted looks, driving in* MARRALL *before him.*

Over. I shall sol fa you, rogue!

Mar. Sir, for what cause
Do you use me thus?

Over. Cause, slave! why, I am angry,
And thou a subject only fit for beating;
And so to cool my choler. Look to the writing;
Let but the seal be broke upon the box,
That has slept in my cabinet these three years,
I'll rack thy soul for it.

Mar. I may yet cry quittance;
Though now I suffer, and dare not resist. [*Aside.*

Over. Lady, by your leave, did you see my daughter, lady?
And the lord, her husband? Are they in your house?
If they are, discover, that I may bid them joy;
And, as an entrance to her place of honour,
See your ladyship on her left hand, and make curt'sies
When she nods on you; which you must receive
As a special favour.

Lady. When I know, Sir Giles,
Her state requires such ceremony, I shall pay it;
But, in the mean time,
I give you to understand, I neither know
Nor care where her honour is.

Over. When you once see her
Supported, and led by the lord her husband,
You'll be taught better——Nephew!

Well. Well.

Over. No more!

Well. 'Tis all I owe you.

Over. Have your redeemed rags
Made you thus insolent?

Well. Insolent to you! [*In scorn.*
Why, what are you, sir, unless in your years,
At the best, more than myself?

Over. His fortune swells him:
'Tis rank; he is married.

Lady. This is excellent!

Over. Sir, in calm language, (though I seldom use it,)
I am familiar with the cause that makes you
Bear up thus bravely; there's a certain buz
Of a stolen marriage; do you hear? of a stolen marriage;
In which, 'tis said, there's somebody hath been cozened.
I name no parties. [*Lady turns away.*

Well. Well, sir, what follows?

Over. Marry this, since you are peremptory: remember,
Upon mere hope of your great match, I lent you
A thousand pounds. Put me in good security,
And suddenly, by mortgage or by statute,
Of some of your new possessions, or I'll have you
Dragged, in your lavender robes, to the jail: you know me,
And therefore do not trifle.

Well. Can you be
So cruel to your nephew, now he is in
The way to rise? Was this your courtesy
You did me in pure love, and no ends else?

Over. End me no ends; engage the whole estate,
And force your spouse to sign it: you shall have
Three or four thousand more to roar and swagger,
And revel in bawdy taverns.

Well. And beg after;
Mean you not so?

Over. My thoughts are mine, and free.
Shall I have security?

Well. No, indeed, you shall not:
Nor bond, nor bill, nor bare acknowledgment:
Your great looks fright not me.

Over. But my deeds shall——
Out-braved! [*They both draw.*

Enter AMBLE, ORDER, *and* FURNACE.

Lady. Help, murder! murder!
Well. Let him come on,
With all his wrongs and injuries about him,
Armed with his cut-throat practices to guard him,
The right that I bring with me will defend me,
And punish his extortion.
Over. That I had thee
But single in the field!
Lady. You may; but make not
My house your quarrelling scene.
Over. Were it in a church,
By heaven and hell, I'll do it!
Mar. Now, put him to
The shewing of the deed.
Well. This rage is vain, sir;
For fighting, fear not, you shall have your hands full
Upon the least incitement; and, whereas
You charge me with a debt of a thousand pounds,
If there be law (howe'er you have no conscience)
Either restore my land, or I'll recover
A debt, that is truly due to me from you,
In value ten times more than what you challenge.
Over. I in thy debt! oh impudence! Did I not purchase
The land left by thy father? that rich land,
That had continued in Wellborn's name
Twenty descents; which, like a riotous fool,

Enter Servant, with a box.

Thou didst make sale of? Is not here inclosed
The deed, that does confirm it mine?
Mar. Now, now.
Well. I do acknowledge none; I ne'er passed o'er
Any such land; I grant, for a year or two,
You had it in trust; which, if you do discharge,
Surrendering the possession, you shall ease
Yourself and me of chargeable suits in law;
Which, if you prove not honest (as I doubt it)
Must of necessity follow.
Lady. In my judgment,
He does advise you well.
Over. Good, good! conspire
With your new husband, lady; second him
In his dishonest practices; but, when
This manor is extended to my use,
You'll speak in an humbler key, and sue for favour.
Lady. Never: do not hope it.
Well. Let despair first seize me.
Over. Yet, to shut up thy mouth, and make thee give
Thyself the lie, the loud lie! I draw out
The precious evidence: If thou canst forswear
Thy hand and seal, and make a forfeit of
[*Opens the box.*
Thy ears to the pillory, see, here's that, will make
My interest clear——Ha!
Lady. A fair skin of parchment
Well. Indented, I confess, and labels, too;
But neither wax nor words. How? thunderstruck!
Not a syllable to insult with? My wise uncle,
Is this your precious evidence, this that makes
Your interest clear?
Over. I am o'erwhelmed with wonder!
What prodigy is this? What subtle devil
Hath razed out the inscription? the wax
Turned into dust!—the rest of my deeds whole
As when they were deliver'd, and this only
Made nothing! Do you deal with witches, rascal?
There's a statute for you, which will bring
Your neck in a hempen circle; yes, there is;
And now, 'tis better thought; for, cheater, know
This juggling shall not save you.
Well. To save thee,
Would beggar the stock of mercy.
Over. Marrall.
Mar. Sir.
Over. Tho' the witnesses are dead,
[*Flattering him.*
Your testimony
Help with an oath or two; and for thy master,
Thy liberal master, my good honest servant,
I know you will swear any thing to dash
This cunning sleight: besides, I know thou art
A public notary, and such stands in law
For a dozen witnesses; the deed being drawn too
By thee, my careful Marrall, and delivered
When thou wert present, will make good my title.
Wilt thou not swear this?
Mar. I! no, I assure you.
I have a conscience, not seared up like yours;
I know no deeds.
Over. Wilt thou betray me?
Mar. Keep him
From using of his hands, I'll use my tongue
To his no little torment.
Over. Mine own varlet
Rebel against me?
Mar. Yes, and uncase you too.
The ideot; the patch; the slave; the booby;
The property, fit only to be beaten
For your morning exercise; your football, or
The unprofitable lump of flesh, your drudge,
Can now anatomize you, and lay open
All your black plots, level with the earth
Your hill of pride——and with these gabions guarded,
Unload my great artillery, and shake,
Nay, pulverize the walls you think defend you.
Lady. How he foams at the mouth with rage!
Well. To him again.
Over. O, that I had thee in my gripe! I would tear thee
Joint after joint!
Mar. I know you are a tearer.
But I'll have first your fangs pared off, and then
Come nearer to you; when I have discovered,
And made it good before the judge, what ways
And devilish practices you used to cozen with
An army of whole families, who yet live,
And but enrolled for soldiers, were able
To take in Dunkirk.

Well. All will come out.
Lady. The better.
Over. But that I will live, rogue, to torture thee,
And make thee wish and kneel in vain to die,
These swords, that keep thee from me, should fix here,
Although they made my body but one wound,
But I would reach thee.
Lov. Heaven's hand is in this;
One bandog worry the other! [*Aside.*
Over. I play the fool, and make my anger but ridiculous.
There will be a time, and place, there will be, cowards!
When you shall feel what I dare do.
Well. I think so:
You dare do any ill, yet want true valour
To be honest and repent.
Over. They are words I know not,
Nor e'er will learn. Patience, the beggar's virtue,
Shall find no harbour here.—After these storms,
At length a calm appears.

Enter GREEDY *and Parson* WELLDO.

Welcome, most welcome!
There's comfort in thy looks; is the deed done?
Is my daughter married? say but so, my chaplain,
And I am tame.
Welldo. Married? yes, I assure you.
Over. Then vanish all sad thoughts! there's more gold for thee.
My doubts and fears are in the titles drowned
Of my right honourable, right honourable daughter.
Greedy. Here will be feasting at least for a month!
I am provided: empty guts, croak no more!
You shall be stuffed, like bag-pipes, not with wind,
But bearing dishes.
Over. Instantly be here? [*Whispering to* WELLDO.
To my wish, to my wish! Now, you that plot against me,
And hoped to trip my heels up, that contemned me,
Think on it and tremble!—[*Loud music.*]—They come; I hear the music.
A lane there for my lord!
Well. This sudden heat
May yet be cooled, sir.
Over. Make way there, for my lord!

Enter ALLWORTH, MARGARET, LOVELL, *and Lady.*

Marg. Sir, first your pardon, then your blessing, with
Your full allowance of the choice I have made.
As ever you could make use of your reason,
Grow not in passion; since you may as well
Call back the day that's past, as untie the knot
Which is too strongly fastened;
Not to dwell too-long on words, [*Kneeling.*
This is my husband.
Over. How!
All. So I assure you; all the rites of marriage,
With every circumstance, are past: Alas, sir!
Although I am no lord, but a lord's page,
Your daughter, and my loved wife, mourns not for it;
And for right honourable son-in-law, you may say
Your dutiful daughter.
Over. Devil! are they married?
Welldo. Do a father's part, and say, Heaven give them joy!
Over. Confusion and ruin! speak, and speak quickly,
Or thou art dead,
Welldo. They are married.
Over. Thou hadst better
Have made a contract with the king of fiends
Than these.——My brain turns!
Welldo. Why this rage to me?
Is not this your letter, sir? and these the words—
Marry her to this gentleman?
Over. It cannot:
Nor will I e'er believe it, 'death! I will not;
That I, that in all passages I touched
At worldly profit have not left a print
Where I have trod, for the most curious search
To trace my footsteps, should be gulled by children,
Baffled and fooled, and all my hopes and labours
Defeated and made void.
Well. As it appears,
You are so, my grave uncle.
Over. Village nurses
Revenge their wrongs with curses; I'll not waste
A syllable, but thus I take the life,
Which, wretch! I gave to thee. [*Offers to kill* MARGARET.
Lov. Hold, for your own sake!
Though charity to your daughter hath quite left you,
Will you do an act, though in your hopes lost here,
Can leave no hope for peace or rest hereafter?
Consider; at the best you're but a man,
And cannot so create your aims, but that
They may be cross'd.
Over. Lord! thus I spit at thee,
And at thy counsel; and again desire thee,
As thou art a soldier, if thy valour
Dares shew itself where multitude and example
Lead not the way, let's quit the house, and change
Six words in private.
Lov. I am ready.
Lady. Stay, sir; contest with one distracted!
Well. You'll grow like him,
Should you answer his vain challenge.
Over. Are you pale?
Borrow his help; though Hercules call it odds,
I'll stand against both, as I am hemm'd in thus.
Since, like a Libyan lion in the toil,
My fury cannot reach the coward hunters,
And only spends itself, I'll quit the place:
Alone, I can do nothing, but I have servants
And friends to second me; and if I make not

This house a heap of ashes, (by my wrongs,
What I have spoke I will make good!) or leave
One throat uncut,—if it be possible,
Hell add to my afflictions! [*Exit.*
Mar. Is't not brave sport?
Greedy. Brave sport! I am sure it has ta'en away my stomach;
I do not like the sauce.
All. Nay, weep not, dearest,
Though it express your pity; what decreed
Above we cannot alter.
Lady. His threats move me
No scruple, madam.
Mar. Was it not a rare trick,
An' it please your worship, to make the deed nothing?
I can do twenty neater, if you please
To purchase and grow rich; for I will be
Such a solicitor and steward for you,
As never worshipful had.
Well. I do believe thee;
But first discover the quaint means you used
To raze out the conveyance?
Mar. They are mysteries
Not to be spoke in public: certain minerals
Incorporated in the ink and wax.—
Besides, he gave me nothing, but still fed me
With hopes and blows; and that was the inducement
To this conundrum. If it please your worship
To call to memory, this mad beast once caused me
To urge you or to drown or hang yourself;
I'll do the like to him, if you command me.
Well. You are a rascal! he that dares be false
To a master, though unjust, will ne'er be true
To any other. Look not for reward
Or favour from me; I will shun thy sight
As I would do a basilisk's: thank my pity,
If thou keep thy ears: howe'er, I will take order
Your practice shall be silenced.
Greedy. I'll commit him,
If you will have me, sir.
Well. That were to little purpose;
His conscience be his prison. Not a word,
But instantly be gone.
Ord. Take this kick with you.
Amb. And this.
Furn. If that I had my cleaver here,
I would divide your knave's head.
Mar. This is the haven
False servants still arrive at. [*Exit.*

Reenter OVERREACH.

Lady. Come again!
Lov. Fear not, I am your guard.
Well. His looks are ghastly.
Welldo. Some little time I have spent, under your favours,
In physical studies, and if my judgment err not,
He's mad beyond recovery: but observe him,
And look to yourselves.
Over. Why, is not the whole world
Included in myself? to what use then
Are friends and servants? Say they were a squadron
Of pikes, lined through with shot, when I am mounted
Upon my injuries, shall I fear to charge them?
No: I'll through the battalia, and, that routed,
[*Flourishing his sword sheathed.*
I'll fall to execution.—Ha! I am feeble:
Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,
And takes away the use of't! and my sword,
Glewed to my scabbard with wronged orphans' tears,
Will not be drawn. Ha! what are these? Sure, hangmen,
That come to bind my hands, and then to drag me
Before the judgment-seat.—Now they are new shapes,
And do appear like furies, with steel whips,
To scourge my ulcerous soul! Shall I then fall
Ingloriously, and yield? No: spite of fate,
I will be forced to hell like to myself;
Though you were legions of accursed spirits,
Thus would I fly among you.——
[*Rushes forward.*
Well. There's no help;
Disarm him first, then bind him.
Greedy. Take a mittimus,
And carry him to Bedlam.
Lov. How he foams!
Well. And bites the earth!
Welldo. Carry him to some dark room,
There try what art can do for his recovery.
Marg. Oh, my dear father!
[*They force* OVER. *off.*
All. You must be patient, mistress.
Lov. Here is a precedent to teach wicked men,
That, when we leave religion, and turn atheists,
Their own abilities leave them. Pray you take comfort. [*To* MARG.
I will endeavour you shall be his guardians
In his distraction: and for your land, Master Wellborn,
Be it good or ill in law, I'll be an umpire
Between you and this the undoubted heir
Of Sir Giles Overreach; for me, here's the anchor
That I must fix on. [*Takes the lady's hand.*
All. What you shall determine,
My lord, I will allow of.
Well. 'Tis the language,
That I speak too; but there is something else
Beside the repossession of my land
And payment of my debts, that I must practise.
I had a reputation, but 'twas lost
In my loose course; and, till I redeem it
Some noble way, I am but half made up.
It is a time of action; if your lordship
Will please to confer a company upon me,
In your command, I doubt not, in my service
To my king and country, but I shall do something
That may make me right again.
Lov. Your suit is granted,
And you loved for the motion;

Well. Nothing wants, then, [*To the Audience.*
But your allowance—and, in that, our all
Is comprehended; it being known, nor we,
Nor he that wrote the comedy, can be free
Without your manumission; which, if you
Grant willingly, as a fair favour due
The poet's and our labours, as you may,
(For we despair not, gentlemen, of the play)
We jointly shall profess your grace hath might
To teach us action, and him how to write.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE COMMITTEE.

BY

SIR R. HOWARD.

PROLOGUE.

To cheat the most judicious eyes, there be
Ways in all trades, but this of poetry;
Your tradesman shews his ware by some false light,
To hide the faults and slightness from your sight;
Nay, though 'tis full of bracks, he'll boldly swear
'Tis excellent, and so help off his ware;
He'll rule your judgment by his confidence,
Which in a poet you'd call impudence;
Nay, if the world afford the like again,
He swears he'll give it you for nothing then.
Those are words too a poet dares not say;
Let it be good or bad, you're sure to pay.
—Would 'twere a penn'worth;——but in this you are
Abler to judge than he that made the ware;
However, his design was well enough;
He try'd to shew some newer-fashion'd stuff:
Not that the name Committee can be new;
That has been too well known to most of you:
But you may smile, for you have past your doom;
The poet dares not,—his is still to come.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Colonel CARELESS.
Colonel BLUNT.
Lieutenant STORY.
NEHEMIAH CATCH,
JOSEPH BLEMISH,
JONATHAN HEADSTRONG,
EZEKIEL SCRAPE,
} *Committee-men.*
Mr DAY, *Chairman to the Committee.*
ABEL, *Son to Mr Day.*
OBADIAH, *Clerk to the Committee.*
TEAGUE.
Tavern Boy.
Bailiff.
Soldier.
Two Chairmen.
Gaol-keeper.
A Servant to Mr Day.
A Stage-coachman.
Bookseller.
Porter.

WOMEN.

Mrs RUTH.
Mrs DAY.
Mrs ARBELLA.
Mrs CHAT.

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

Enter Mrs DAY, *brushing her hoods and scarfs,* *Mrs* ARBELLA, *Mrs* RUTH, *Colonel* BLUNT, *and a Stage-coachman.*

Mrs Day. Now, out upon't, how dusty 'tis! All things consider'd, 'tis better travelling in the winter, especially for us of the better sort, that ride in coaches. And yet, to say truth, warm weather is both pleasant and comfortable: 'tis a thousand pities that fair weather should do any hurt.—Well said, honest coachman, thou hast done thy part! My son Abel paid for my place at Reading; did he not?

Coach. Yes, an't please you.

Mrs Day. Well, there's something extraordinary, to make thee drink.

Coach. By my whip, 'tis a groat of more than ordinary thinness.—Plague on this new gentry, how liberal they are. [*Aside.*] Farewell, young mistress; farewell, gentlemen. Pray, when you come by Reading, let Toby carry you. [*Exit.*

Mrs Day. Why, how now, Mrs Arbella! What, sad! Why, what's the matter?

Arb. I am not very sad.

Mrs Day. Nay, by my honour, you need not, if you knew as much as I. Well——I'll tell you one thing; you are well enough; you need not fear, whoever does; say I told you so—if you do not hurt yourself; for as cunning as he is, and let him be as cunning as he will, I can see, with half an eye, that my son Abel means to take care of you in your composition, and will needs have you his guest. Ruth and you shall be bed-follows. I warrant, that same Abel many and many a time will wish his sister's place; or else his father ne'er got him——Though I say it, that should not say it, yet I do say it——'tis a notable fellow——

Arb. I am fallen into strange hands, if they prove as busy as her tongue. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. And now you talk of this same Abel, I tell you but one thing:——I wonder that neither he nor my husband's honour's chief clerk, Obadiah, is not here ready to attend me. I dare warrant my son Abel has been here two hours before us; 'tis the veriest Princox; he will ever be galloping, and yet he is not full one-and-twenty, for all his appearances. He never stole this trick of galloping; his father was just such another before him, and would gallop with the best of 'em: he and Mrs Busie's husband were counted the best horsemen in Reading——ay, and Berkshire to boot. I have rode formerly behind Mr Busie, but in truth I cannot now endure to travel but in a coach; my own is at present in disorder, and so I was fain to shift in this;—but I warrant you, if his honour, Mr Day, chairman of the honourable committee of sequestrations, should know that his wife rode in a stage-coach, he would make the house too hot for some.——Why, how is't with you, sir? What, weary of your journey? [*To the Colonel.*

Blunt. Her tongue will never tire. [*Aside.*]—So many, mistress, riding in the coach, has a little distemper'd me with heat.

Mrs Day. So many, sir! why there were but six—What would you say if I should tell you that I was one of eleven that travell'd at one time in one coach?

Blunt. O, the devil! I have given her a new theme. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. Why, I'll tell you—Can you guess how 'twas?

Blunt. Not I, truly. But 'tis no matter, I do believe it.

Mrs Day. Look you, thus it was: there was, in the first place, myself, and my husband I should have said first, but his honour would have pardon'd me if he had heard me; Mr Busie that I told you of, and his wife; the mayor of Reading and his wife; and this Ruth that you see there, in one of our laps—but now, where do you think the rest were?

Blunt. A top o' th' coach, sure.

Mrs Day. Nay, I durst swear you would never guess—why—would you think it; I had two growing in my belly, Mrs Busie one in hers, and Mrs Mayoress of Reading a chopping boy, as it proved afterwards, in hers, as like the father as if it had been spit out of his mouth; and if he had come out of his mouth, he had come out of as honest a man's mouth as any in forty miles of the head of him: for, would you think it? at the very same time, when this same Ruth was sick, it being the first time the girl was ever coach'd, the good man, Mr Mayor, I mean, that I spoke of, held his hat for the girl to ease her stomach in.——

Enter ABEL *and* OBADIAH.

—O, are you come? Long look'd for comes at last. What—you have a slow, set pace, as well as your hasty scribble, sometimes. Did you not think it fit that I should have found attendance ready for me when I alighted?

Ob. I ask your honour's pardon; for I do profess unto your ladyship, I had attended sooner, but that his young honour, Mr Abel, demurr'd me by his delays.

Mrs Day. Well, son Abel, you must be obey'd; and I partly, if not quite, guess your business; providing for the entertainment of one I have

in my eye. Read her and take her.——Ah, is't not so?

Abel. I have not been deficient in my care, forsooth.

Mrs Day. Will you never leave your forsooths? Art thou not ashamed to let the clerk carry himself better, and shew more breeding, than his master's son?

Abel. If it please your honour, I have some business for your more private ear.

Mrs Day. Very well.

Ruth. What a lamentable condition has that gentleman been in! faith I pity him.

Arb. Are you so apt to pity men?

Ruth. Yes, men that are humoursome, as I would children that are froward; I would not make them cry on purpose.

Arb. Well, I like his humour; I dare swear he's plain and honest.

Ruth. Plain enough, of all conscience; faith, I'll speak to him.

Arb. Nay, pr'ythee don't: he'll think thee rude.

Ruth. Why then I'll think him an ass.—How is't after your journey, sir?

Blunt. Why, I am worse after it.

Ruth. Do you love riding in a coach, sir?

Blunt. No, forsooth, nor talking after riding in a coach.

Ruth. I should be loath to interrupt your meditations, sir: we may have the fruits hereafter.

Blunt. If you have, they shall break loose spite of my teeth.—This spawn is as bad as the great pike. [*Aside.*

Arb. Pr'ythee peace!——Sir, we wish you all happiness.

Blunt. And quiet, good sweet ladies—I like her well enough.——Now would not I have her say any more, for fear she should jeer too, and spoil my good opinion. If 'twere possible, I would think well of one woman.

Mrs Day. Come, Mrs Arbella, 'tis as I told you; Abel has done it; say no more. Take her by the hand, Abel; I profess, she may venture to take thee for better for worse. Come, mistress, the honourable committee will sit suddenly. Come, let's along. Farewell, sir.

[*Exeunt all but* BLUNT.

Blunt. How! the committee ready to sit! Plague on their honours; for so my honour'd lady, that was one of the eleven, was pleas'd to call 'em. I had like to have come a day after the fair. 'Tis pretty, that such as I have been must compound for their having been rascals. Well, I must go look a lodging, and a solicitor: I'll find the arrantest rogue I can, too: for, according to the old saying, set a thief to catch a thief.

Enter Colonel CARELESS *and Lieutenant.*

Care. Dear Blunt, well met; when came you, man?

Blunt. Dear Careless, I did not think to have met thee so suddenly. Lieutenant, your servant. I am landed just now, man.

Care. Thou speak'st as if thou had'st been at sea.

Blunt. It's pretty well guess'd; I have been in a storm.

Care. What business brought thee?

Blunt. May be the same with yours; I am come to compound with their honours.

Care. That's my business too. Why, the committee sits suddenly.

Blunt. Yes, I know it; I heard so in the storm I told thee of.

Care. What storm, man?

Blunt. Why, a tempest, as high as ever blew from woman's breath. I have rode in a stage-coach, wedged in with half a dozen; one of them was a committee-man's wife; his name is Day; and she accordingly will be call'd your honour, and your ladyship; with a tongue that wags as much faster than all other women's, as, in the several motions of a watch, the hand of the minute moves faster than that of the hour. There was her daughter, too; but a bastard, without question: for she had no resemblance to the rest of the notch'd rascals, and very pretty, and had wit enough to jeer a man in prosperity to death.——There was another gentlewoman, and she was handsome; nay, very handsome; but I kept her from being as bad as the rest.

Care. Pr'ythee, how, man?

Blunt. Why, she began with two or three good words, and I desired her she would be quiet while she was well.

Care. Thou wert not so mad.

Blunt. I had been mad if I had not——But when we came to our journey's end, there met us two such formal and stately rascals, that yet pretended religion and open rebellion ever painted: they were the hopes and guide of the honourable family, viz. the eldest son, and the chiefest clerk, rogues—and hereby hangs a tale.—This gentlewoman, I told thee, I kept civil, by desiring her to say nothing, is a rich heiress of one that died in the king's service, and left his estate under sequestration. This young chicken has this kite snatch'd up, and designs her for this her eldest rascal.

Care. What a dull fellow wert thou, not to make love, and rescue her!

Blunt. I'll woo no woman.

Care. Wouldst thou have them court thee? A soldier, and not love a siege!—How now, who art thou?

Enter TEAGUE.

Teague. A poor Irishman, Heav'n save me, and save all your three faces; give me a thirteen.

Care. I see thou wouldst not lose any thing for want of asking.

Teague. I cann't afford it.

Care. Here, I am pretty near; there's sixpence for thy confidence.

Teague. By my troth it is too little; give me another sixpence half-penny, and I'll drink your healths.

Care. How long hast thou been in England?

Teague. Ever since I came here, and longer too, faith.

Care. What hast thou done since thou cam'st into England?

Teague. Serv'd Heaven, and St Patrick, and my good sweet king, and my good sweet master; yes, indeed.

Care. And what dost thou do now?

Teague. Cry for them every day, upon my soul.

Care. Why, where's thy master?

Teague. He's dead, mastero, and left poor Teague. Upon my soul, he never served poor Teague so before in all his life.

Care. Who was thy master?

Teague. E'en the good colonel Danger.

Care. He was my dear and noble friend.

Teague. Yes, that he was, and poor Teague's too.

Care. What dost thou mean to do?

Teague. I will get a good master, if any good master will get me: I cannot tell what to do else, by my soul; for I went to one Lilly's; he lives at that house, at the end of another house, by the May-pole house, and tells every body, by one star, and t'other star, what good look they shall have; but he could not tell nothing for poor Teague.

Care. Why, man?

Teague. Why, 'tis done by the stars and the planters; and he told me there were no stars for Irishmen. I told him there was as many stars in Ireland as in England, and more too; and if a good master cannot get me, I will run into Ireland, and see if the stars be not there still; and if they be, I will come back, and beat his pate, if he will not then tell me some good look, and some stars.

Care. Poor fellow! I pity him: I fancy's he's simply honest.—Hast thou any trade?

Teague. Bo, bub bub bo! a trade, a trade! an Irishman with a trade! an Irishman scorns a trade; his blood is too thick for a trade. I will run for thee forty miles; but I scorn to have a trade.

Blunt. Alas, poor simple fellow!

Care. I pity him; nor can I endure to see any man miserable that can weep for my prince and friend. Well, Teague, what sayest thou if I will take thee?

Teague. Why, I say you could not do a better thing.

Care. Thy master was my dear friend; wert thou with him when he was kill'd?

Teague. Yes, upon my soul, that I was; and I did howl over him, and I ask'd him why he died, but the devil burn the word he said to me; and i'faith I staid kissing his sweet face, 'till the rogues came upon me, and took all away from me, and left me nothing but this mantle: I have never any victuals, neither, but a little snuff.

Care. Come, thou shalt live with me; love me as thou didst thy master.

Teague. That I will, if you will be good to poor Teague.

Care. Now, to our business; for I came but last night myself; and the lieutenant and I were just going to seek a solicitor.

Blunt. One may serve us all; what say you, lieutenant; can you furnish us?

Lieu. Yes, I think I can help you to plough with a heifer of their own.

Care. Now I think on't, Blunt, why didst thou not begin with the committee-man's cow?

Blunt. Plague on her, she lowbell'd me so, that I thought of nothing, but stood shrinking like a dar'd lark.

Lieu. But, hark you, gentlemen, there's an ill-tasting dose to be swallow'd first; there's a covenant to be taken.

Teague. Well, what is that covenant? By my soul I will take it for my new master.

Care. Thank thee, Teague.——A covenant, say'st thou?

Teague. Well, where is that covenant?

Care. We'll not swear, lieutenant.

Lieu. You must have no land, then.

Blunt. Then, farewell acres, and may the dirt choak 'em.

Care. 'Tis but being reduced to Teague's equipage: 'twas a lucky thing to have a fellow that can teach one this cheap diet of snuff.

Teague. Oh, you shall have your bellyful of it.

Lieu. Come, gentlemen, we must lose no more time: I'll carry you to my poor house, where you shall lodge: for, know, I am married to a most illustrious person, that had a kindness for me.

Care. Pr'ythee, how didst thou light upon this good fortune?

Lieu. Why, you see there are stars in England, though none in Ireland. Come, gentlemen, time calls us; you shall have my story hereafter.

[*Exeunt* BLUNT *and Lieutenant.*

Care. Come, Teague: however, I have suit of clothes for thee; thou shalt lay by thy blanket for some time. It may be, thee and I may be reduced together to thy country fashion.

Teague. Upon my soul, joy, I will carry thee to my little estate in Ireland.

Care. Hast thou got an estate?

Teague. By my soul, and I have: but the land is of such a nature, that if you had it for nothing, you would scarce make your money of it.

Care. Why, there's the worst on't; the best will help itself. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mr DAY *and Mrs* DAY.

Mr Day. Welcome, sweet duck; I profess thou hast brought home good company, indeed; money and money's worth: if we can but now make sure of this heiress, Mrs Arbella, for our son Abel.

Mrs Day. If we can! you are ever at your *if's*; you're afraid of your shadow; I can tell you one *if* more, that is, *if* I did not bear you up, your heart would be down in your breeches at every turn. Well, if I were gone—there's another *if* for you.

Mr Day. I profess thou sayest true; I should

not know what to do indeed. I am beholden to thy good counsel for many a good thing; I had ne'er got Ruth, nor her estate, into my fingers else.

Mrs Day. Nay, in that business too, you were at your *ifs*. Now, you see she goes currently for our own daughter; and this Arbella shall be our daughter too, or she shall have no estate.

Mr Day. If we could but do that, wife!

Mrs Day. Yet again at your *ifs*?

Mr Day. I have done, I have done; to your counsel, good duck; you know I depend upon that.

Mrs Day. You may, well enough: you find the sweet on't; and, to say truth, 'tis known too well that you rely upon it. In truth, they are ready to call me the committee-man; they well perceive the weight that lies upon me, husband.

Mr Day. Nay, good duck, no chiding now, but to your counsel.

Mrs Day. In the first place, (observe how I lay a design in politics,) d'ye mark? counterfeit me a letter from the king, where he shall offer you great matters to serve him and his interest under-hand. Very good; and in it let him remember his kind love and service to me. This will make 'em look about 'em, and think you somebody. Then promise them, if they'll be true friends to you, to live and die with them, and refuse all great offers; then, whilst 'tis warm, get the composition of Arbella's estate into your own power, upon your design of marrying her to Abel.

Mr Day. Excellent.

Mrs Day. Mark the luck on't too; their names sound alike; Abel and Arbella, they are the same to a trifle; it seemeth a providence.

Mr Day. Thou observest right, duck, thou canst see as far into a millstone as another.

Mrs Day. Pish! do not interrupt me.

Mr Day. I do not, good duck, I do not.

Mrs Day. You do not, and yet you do; you put me off from the concatenation of my discourse. Then, as I was saying, you may intimate to your honourable fellows, that one good turn deserves another. That language is understood amongst you, I take it, ha?

Mr Day. Yes, yes, we use those items often.

Mrs Day. Well, interrupt me not.

Mr Day. I do not, good wife.

Mrs Day. You do not, and yet you do. By this means get her composition put wholly into your hands; and then, no Abel, no land—But, in the mean time, I would have Abel do his part too.

Mr Day. Ay, ay, there's a want; I found it.

Mrs Day. Yes, when I told you so before.

Mr Day. Why, that's true, duck, he is too backward; if I were in this place, and as young as I have been—

Mrs Day. O, you'd do wonders! But, now I think on't, there may be some use made of Ruth; 'tis a notable witty harlotry.

Mr Day. Ay, and so she is, duck; I always thought so.

Mrs Day. You thought so, when I told you I had thought on't first.—Let me see—It shall be so; we'll set her to instruct Abel, in the first place, and then to incline Arbella; they are hand and glove; and women can do much with one another.

Mr Day. Thou hast hit upon my own thoughts.

Mrs Day. Pray, call her in; you thought of that too, did you not?

Mr Day. I will, duck. Ruth! why, Ruth!

Enter RUTH.

Ruth. Your pleasure, sir?

Mr Day. Nay, 'tis my wife's desire, that—

Mrs Day. Well, if it be your wife's, she can best tell it herself, I suppose. D'ye hear, Ruth; you may do a business that may not be the worse for you. You know I use but few words.

Ruth. What does she call a few? [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. Look you now, as I said, to be short, and to the matter; my husband and I do design this Mrs Arbella for our son Abel, and the young fellow is not forward enough. You conceive? Pr'ythee, give him a little instructions how to demean himself, and in what manner to speak, which we call address, to her; for women best know what will please women. Then, work on Arbella on the other side; work, I say, my poor girl; no more, but so. You know my custom is to use but few words. Much may be said in a little: you sha'n't repent it.

Mr Day. And I say something too, Ruth.

Mrs Day. What need you? Don't you see it all said already to your hand? What sayest thou, girl?

Ruth. I shall do my best—I would not lose the sport for more than I'll speak of. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. Go, call Abel, good girl. [*Exit* RUTH.] By bringing this to pass, husband, we shall secure ourselves, if the king should come; you'll be hang'd else.

Mr Day. Oh, good wife, let's secure ourselves by all means. There's a wise saying: 'Tis good to have a shelter against every storm. I remember that.

Mrs Day. You may well, when you have heard me say it so often.

Enter RUTH *with* ABEL.

Mr Day. O, son Abel, d'ye hear—

Mrs Day. Pray hold your peace, and give every body leave to tell their own tale——D'ye hear, son Abel, I have formerly told you that Arbella would be a good wife for you: a word's enough to the wise: some endeavours must be used, and you must not be deficient. I have spoken to your sister Ruth, to instruct you what to say, and how to carry yourself; observe her directions, as you'll answer the contrary; be confident, and put home. Ha, boy, hadst thou but thy mother's pate! Well, 'tis but a folly to talk of that that cannot be! Be sure you follow your sister's directions.

Mr Day. Be sure, boy.—Well said, duck, I say. [*Exeunt Mr and Mrs* DAY.

Ruth. Now, brother Abel.

Abel. Now, sister Ruth.

Ruth. Hitherto he observes me punctually. [*Aside.*] Have you a month's mind to this gentlewoman, Mrs Arbella?

Abel. I have not known her a week yet.

Ruth. O, cry you mercy, good brother Abel. Well, to begin then, you must alter your posture, and by your grave and high demeanour, make yourself appear a hole above Obadiah; lest your mistress should take you for such another scribble-scrabble as he is; and always hold up your head as if it were bolster'd up with high matters; your hands join'd flat together, projecting a little beyond the rest of your body, as ready to separate when you begin to open.

Abel. Must I go apace, or softly?

Ruth. O, gravely, by all means, as if you were loaded with weighty considerations—so—Very well Now, to apply our prescription. Suppose, now, that I were your mistress, Arbella, and met you by accident—Keep your posture—so—and when you come just to me, start like a horse that has spy'd something on one side of him, and give a little gird out of the way, declaring that you did not see her before, by reason of your deep contemplations. Then you must speak. Let's hear.

Abel. Save you, mistress.

Ruth. O, fie, man! you should begin thus: Pardon, mistress, my profound contemplations, in which I was so buried that I did not see you:—and then, as she answers, proceed. I know what she'll say, I am so used to her.

Abel. This will do well, if I forget it not.

Ruth. Well, try once.

Abel. Pardon, mistress, my profound contemplations, in which I was so hid, that you could not see me.

Ruth. Better sport than I expected. [*Aside.* Very well done, you're perfect. Then she will answer,—Sir, I suppose you are so busied with state affairs, that it may well hinder you from taking notice of any thing below them.

Abel. No, forsooth, I have some profound contemplations, but no state affairs.

Ruth. O, fie, man! you must confess that the weighty affairs of state lie heavy upon you; but 'tis a burthen you must bear; and then shrug your shoulders.

Abel. Must I say so? I am afraid my mother will be angry, for she takes all the state matters upon herself.

Ruth. Pish! Did she not charge you to be ruled by me? Why, man, Arbella will never have you, if she be not made believe you can do great matters with parliament-men and committee-men: how should she hope for any good by you else in her composition?

Abel. I apprehend you now; I shall observe.

Ruth. 'Tis well; at this time I'll say no more: look at yourself in your posture—so—Now go look for your mistress; I'll warrant you the town's our own.

Abel. I go. [*Exit* ABEL.

Ruth. Now I have fixed him, not to go off till he discharges on his mistress. I could burst with laughing.

Enter ARBELLA.

Arb. What dost thou laugh at, Ruth?

Ruth. Didst thou meet my brother Abel?

Arb. No.

Ruth. If thou hadst met him right, he had played at hard head with thee.

Arb. What dost thou mean?

Ruth. Why, I have been teaching him to woo, by command of my superiors; and have instructed him to hold up his head so high, that of necessity he must run against every thing that comes in his way.

Arb. Who is he to woo?

Ruth. Even thy own sweet self.

Arb. Out upon him.

Ruth. Nay, thou wilt be rarely courted; I'll not spoil the sport by telling thee any thing before-hand. They have sent to Lilly; and his learning being built upon knowing what most people would have him say, he has told them, for a certain, that Abel shall have a rich heiress; and that must be you.

Arb. Must be?

Ruth. Yes, committee-men can compel more than stars.

Arb. I fear this too late. You are their daughter, Ruth.

Ruth. I deny that.

Arb. How!

Ruth. Wonder not that I begin thus freely with you; 'tis to invite your confidence in me.

Arb. You amaze me.

Ruth. Pray do not wonder, nor suspect—— When my father, Sir Basil Thoroughgood, died, I was very young, not above two years old: 'tis too long to tell you how this rascal, being a trustee, catch'd me and my estate, being the sole heiress unto my father, into his gripes; and now for some years has confirmed his unjust power by the unlawful power of the times. I fear they have designs as bad as this on you. You see I have no reserve, and endeavour to be thought worthy of your friendship.

Arb. I embrace it with as much clearness. Let us love and assist one another.——Would they marry me to this their first-born puppy?

Ruth. No doubt, or keep your composition from you.

Arb. 'Twas my ill fortune to fall into such hands, foolishly enticed by fair words and large promises of assistance.

Ruth. Peace!

Enter OBADIAH.

Ob. Mrs Ruth, my master is demanding your company, together, and not singly, with Mrs Arbella; you will find them in the parlour. The

committee being ready to sit, calls upon my care and circumspection to set in order the weighty matters of state for their wise and honourable inspection. [*Exit.*

Ruth. We come. Come, dear Arbella, never be perplex'd; cheerful spirits are the best bladders to swim with: if thou art sad, the weight will sink thee. Be secret, and still know me for no other than what I seem to be, their daughter. Another time thou shalt know all particulars of my strange story.

Arb. Come, wench; they cannot bring us to compound for our humours; they shall be free still. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter TEAGUE.

Teague. I'faith, my sweet master has sent me to a rascal; I have a great mind to go back and tell him so. He asked me, why he could not send one that could speak English. Upon my soul, I was going to give him an Irish knock. The devil's in them all, they will not talk with me. I will go near to knock this man's pate, and that man Lilly's pate too——that I will: I will teach them prat to me. [*One cries books within.*] How now, what noises are that?—

Enter Bookseller.

Book. New books, new books! A Desperate Plot and Engagement of the Bloody Cavaliers! Mr Saltmarsh's Alarum to the Nation, after having been three days dead! Mercurius Britannicus, &c.

Teague. How's that? They cannot live in Ireland after they are dead three days!

Book. Mercurius Britannicus, or the Weekly Post; or, The Solemn League and Covenant.

Teague. What is that you say? Is it the covenant you have?

Book. Yes; what then, sir?

Teague. Which is that covenant?

Book. Why, this is the covenant.

Teague. Well, I must take that covenant.

Book. You take my commodities?

Teague. I must take that covenant, upon my soul now.

Book. Stand off, sir, or I'll set you further.

Teague. Well, upon my soul now, I will take that covenant for my master.

Book. Your master must pay me for't then!

Teague. I must take it first, and my master will pay you afterwards.

Book. You must pay me now—

Teague. Oh, that I will—[*Knocks him down.*] Now you're paid, you thief o' the world. Here's covenants enough to poison the whole nation. [*Exit.*

Book. What a devil ails this fellow? [*Crying.*] He did not come to rob me certainly, for he has not taken above two pennyworth of lamentable ware away; but I feel the rascal's fingers. I may light upon my wild Irishman again, and if I do, I will fix him with some catchpoles that shall be worse than his own country bogs. [*Exit*

Enter Colonel CARELESS, *Colonel* BLUNT, *and Lieutenant* STORY.

Lieu. And what say you, noble colonels? How, and how d'ye like my lady? I gave her the title of Illustrious, from those illustrious commodities which she deals in, hot waters and tobacco.

Care. Pr'ythee, how cam'st thou to think of marrying?

Lieu. Why, that which hinders other men from those venereal conditions prompted me to matrimony; hunger and cold, colonel.

Care. Which you destroyed with a fat woman, strong water, and stinking tobacco.

Lieu. No, faith; the woman conduced but little; but the rest could not be purchased without.

Care. She's beholden to you.

Lieu. For all your mocking, she had been ruined if it had not been for me.

Care. Pr'ythee, make but that good.

Lieu. With ease, sir——Why, look you, you must know she was always a most violent cavalier, and of a most ready and large faith; abundance of rascals had found her soft place, and perpetually would bring her news, news of all prices; they would tell her news from half-a-crown to a gill of hot water, or a pipe of the worst mundungus. I have observ'd their usual rates: they would borrow half-a-crown upon a story of five thousand men up in the north; a shilling upon a town's revolting; sixpence upon a small castle, and consume hot water and tobacco whilst they were telling news of arms conveyed into several parts, and ammunition hid in cellars; that, at the last, if I had not married, and blown off these flies, she had been absolutely consumed.

Care. Well, lieutenant, we are beholden to you for these hints; we may be reduced to as bad. See where Teague comes. Goodness, how he smiles! Why so merry, Teague?

Enter TEAGUE, *smiling.*

Teague. I have done a thing for you indeed.

Care. What hast thou done, man?

Teague. Guess.

Care. I cann't.

Teague. Why, then, guess again—I have taken the covenant.

Care. How came you by it?

Teague. Very honestly; I knocked a fellow down in the street, and took it from him.

Care. Was there ever such a fancy? Why, didst thou think this was the way to take the covenant?

Teague. I am sure it is the shortest and the cheapest way to take it.

Blunt. I am pleased yet with the poor fellow's mistaken kindness; I dare warrant him honest, to the best of his understanding.

Care. This fellow, I prophesy, will bring me into many troubles by his mistakes: I must send him on no errand but, How d'ye; and to such as I would have no answer from again.—Yet his simple honesty prevails with me; I cannot part with him.

Lieu. Come, gentlemen, time calls——How now, who's this?

Enter OBADIAH, *and four Persons more, with Papers.*

Care. I am a rogue if I have not seen a picture in hangings walk as fast.

Blunt. 'Slife, man, this is that good man of the committee family that I told thee of; the very clerk: how the rogue's loaded with papers!——Those are the winding-sheets to many a poor gentleman's estate. 'Twere a good deed to burn them all.

Care. Why, thou art not mad?——Well met, sir; pray do not you belong to the committee of sequestrations?

Ob. I do belong to that honourable committee, who are now ready to sit for the bringing on the work.

Blunt. Oh, plague! what work, ras—

Care. Pr'ythee be quiet, man.—Are they to sit presently?

Ob. As soon as I can get ready, my presence being material. [*Exit.*

Care. What, wert thou mad? Wouldst thou have beaten the clerk, when thou wert going to compound with the rascals, his masters?

Blunt. The sight of any of the villains stirs me.

Lieu. Come, colonels, there's no trifling; let's make haste, and prepare your business; let's not lose this sitting. Come along, Teague. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ARBELLA *at one door,* ABEL *at another, as if he saw her not, and starts when he comes to her, as* RUTH *had taught him.*

Arb. What's the meaning of this? I'll try to steal by him.

Abel. Pardon, mistress, my profound contemplations, in which I was so hid that you could not see me.

Arb. This is a set form—they allow it in every thing but their prayers.

Abel. Now you should speak, forsooth.

Arb. Ruth, I have found you; but I'll spoil the dialogue.—[*Aside.*]—What should I say, sir?

Abel. What you please, forsooth.

Arb. Why, truly, sir, 'tis as you say; I did not see you.

Enter RUTH, *as over-hearing them, and peeps.*

Ruth. This is lucky.

Abel. No, forsooth, 'twas I that was not to see you.

Arb. Why, sir, would your mother be angry if you should?

Abel. No, no, quite contrary—I'll tell you that presently; but first I must say, that the weighty affairs lie heavy upon my neck and shoulder. [*Shrugs.*

Arb. Would he were tied neck and heels——This is a notable wench: look where the rascal peeps too; if I should beckon to her she'd take no notice; she is resolved not to relieve me. [*Aside.*

Abel. Something I can do, and that with somebody; that is, with those that are somebodies.

Arb. Whist, whist. [*Beckons to* RUTH, *and she shakes her head.*] Pr'ythee, have some pity. O, unmerciful girl!

Abel. I know parliament-men, and sequestrators; I know committee-men, and committee-men know me.

Arb. You have great acquaintance, sir?

Abel. Yes, they ask my opinion, sometimes—

Arb. What weather 'twill be. Have you any skill, sir?

Abel. When the weather is not good, we hold a fast.

Arb. And then it alters?

Abel. Assuredly.

Arb. In good time—No mercy, wench?

Abel. Our profound contemplations are caused by the consternation of our spirits for the nation's good; we are in labour.

Arb. And I want a deliverance.——Hark ye, Ruth, take off your dog, or I'll turn bear indeed.

Ruth. I dare not; my mother will be angry.

Arb. O, hang you.

Abel. You shall perceive that I have some power, if you please to—

Arb. O, I am pleased, sir, that you should have power! I must look out my hoods and scarfs, sir: 'tis almost time to go.

Abel. If it were not for the weighty matters of state which lie upon my shoulders, myself would look them.

Arb. O, by no means, sir; 'tis below your greatness—Some luck yet; she never came seasonably before.

Enter Mrs DAY.

Mrs Day. Why, how now, Abel? Got so close to Mrs Arbella; so close indeed! nay, then I smell something. Well, Mr Abel, you have been so us'd to secrecy in counsel and weighty matters, that you have it at your fingers' ends. Nay, look ye, mistress, look ye, look ye; mark Abel's eyes; ah, there he looks. Ruth, thou art a good girl; I find Abel has got ground.

Ruth. I forbore to come in, till I saw your honour first enter: but I have overheard all.

Mrs Day. And how has Abel behaved himself, wench, ha?

Ruth. O, beyond expectation! If it were lawful, I'd undertake he'd make nothing to get as many women's good-wills as he speaks to: he'll not need much teaching; you may turn him loose.

Arb. O, this plaguy wench!

Mrs Day. Say'st thou so, girl? It shall be something in thy way; a new gown, or so; it may be a better penny. Well said, Abel, I say; I did think thou would'st come out with a piece of thy mother's at last:——But I had forgot the committee are near upon sitting. Ha, mistress, you are crafty; you have made your composition before-hand. Ah, this Abel's as bad as a whole committee; take that item from me. Come, make haste, call the coach, Abel. Well said Abel, I say. [*Exeunt Mrs* DAY *and* ABEL.

Arb. We'll fetch our things and follow you. Now, wench, canst thou ever hope to be forgiven?

Ruth. Why, what's the matter?

Arb. The matter! Couldst thou be so unmerciful, to see me practised on, and pelted at, by a blunderbuss charged with nothing but proofs, weighty affairs, spirit, profound contemplation, and such like?

Ruth. Why, I was afraid to interrupt you; I thought it convenient to give you what time I could, to make his young honour your friend.

Arb. I am beholden to you: I may cry quittance.

Ruth. But did you mark Abel's eyes? Ah, there were looks!

Arb. Nay, pr'ythee give off; my hour's approaching, and I cann't be heartily merry till it be past. Come, let's fetch our things; her ladyship's honour will stay for us.

Ruth. I'll warrant ye, my brother Abel is not in order yet; he's brushing a hat almost a quarter of an hour, and as long a driving the lint from his black clothes, with his wet thumb.

Arb. Come, pr'ythee hold thy peace; I shall laugh in's face else, when I see him come along. Now for an old shoe. [*Exeunt.*

A Table set out. The Committee, and OBADIAH *ordering Books and Papers.*

Ob. Shall I read your honours' last order, and give you the account of what you last debated?

Mr Day. I first crave your favours, to communicate an important matter to this honourable board, in which I shall discover unto you my own sincerity and zeal to the good cause.

1 *Com.* Proceed, sir.

Mr Day. The business is contained in this letter: 'tis from no less a man than the king; and 'tis to me, as simple as I sit here. Is it your pleasures that our clerk should read it?

2 *Com.* Yes, pray give it him.

Ob. [*Reads.*] "Mr Day, we have received good intelligence of your great worth and ability, especially in state matters; and therefore thought fit to offer you any preferment or honour that you shall desire, if you will become my entire friend. Pray remember my love and service to your discreet wife, and acquaint her with this; whose wisdom I hear is great. So, recommending this to her and your wise consideration, I remain Your friend, C. K.

2 *Com.* C. K.!

Mr Day. Ay, that's for the king.

2 *Com.* I suspect—[*Aside.*]—Who brought you this letter?

Mr Day. Oh, fie upon't! my wife forgot that particular.—[*Aside.*]——Why, a fellow left it for me, and shrunk away when he had done. I warrant you, he was afraid I should have laid hold on him. You see, brethren, what I reject; but I doubt not but to receive my reward; and I have now a business to offer, which in some measure may afford you an occasion.

2 *Com.* This letter was counterfeited certainly. [*Aside.*

Mr Day. But first be pleased to read your last order.

2 *Com.* What does he mean? That concerns me. [*Aside.*

Ob. The order is, that the composition arising out of Mr Lashley's estate be, and hereby is invested and allowed to the honourable Mr Nathaniel Catch, for and in respect of his sufferings and good service.

Mr Day. It is meet, very meet; we are bound in duty to strengthen ourselves against the day of trouble, when the common enemy shall endeavour to raise commotions in the land, and disturb our new-built Zion.

2 *Com.* Then I'll say nothing, but close with him: we must wink at one another—I receive your sense of my services with a zealous kindness. Now, Mr Day, I pray you propose your business.

Mr Day. I desire this honourable board to understand, that my wife being at Reading, and to come up in the stage-coach, it happened that one Mrs Arbella, a rich heiress of one of the cavalier party, came up also in the same coach. Her father being newly dead, and her estate before being under sequestration, my wife, who has a notable pate of her own, (you all know her,) presently cast about to get her for my son Abel; and accordingly invited her to my house; where, though time was but short, yet my son Abel made use of it. They are without, as I suppose: but before we call them in, I pray let us handle such other matters as are before us.

1 *Com.* Let us hear then what estates besides lie before us, that we may see how large a field we have to walk in.

2 *Com.* Read.

Ob. One of your last debates was upon the plea of an infant, whose estate is under sequestration.

Mr Day. And fit to be kept so till he comes of age, and may answer for himself; that he may not be in possession of the land till he can promise he will not turn to the enemy.

Ob. Here is another of almost the like nature;

an estate before your honours under sequestration. The plea is, that the party died without any offer of taking up arms; but in his opinion he was for the king. He has left his widow with child, which will be the heir; and his trustees complain of wrong, and claim the estate.

2 *Com.* Well, the father, in his opinion, was a cavalier?

Ob. So it is given in.

2 *Com.* Nay, 'twas so, I warrant you; and there's a young cavalier in his widow's belly; I warrant you that too; for the perverse generation increaseth. I move, therefore, that their two estates may remain in the hands of our brethren here, and fellow-labourers, Mr Joseph Blemish, and Mr Jonathan Headstrong, and Mr Ezekiel Scrupe, and they to be accountable at our pleasures; whereby they may have a godly opportunity of doing good for themselves.

Mr Day. Order it, order it.

3 *Com.* Since it is your pleasures, we are content to take the burthen upon us, and be stewards to the nation.

2 *Com.* Now verily it seemeth to me that the work goeth forward, when brethren hold together in unity.

Mr Day. Well, if we have now finished, give me leave to tell you my wife is without, together with the gentlewoman that is to compound. She will needs have a finger in the pye.

3 *Com.* I profess we are to blame to let Mrs Day wait so long.

Mr Day. We may not neglect the public for private respects. I hope, brethren, that you will please to cast the favour of your countenances upon Abel.

2 3 *Com.* You wrong us to doubt it, brother Day. Call in the compounders.

Ob. Call in the compounders.

Por. Come in the compounders.

Enter Mrs DAY, ABEL, ARBELLA, RUTH; *and after them the Colonels and* TEAGUE: *they give the Door-keeper something, who seems to scrape.*

Mr Day. Come duck, I have told the honourable committee that you are one that will needs endeavour to do good for this gentlewoman.

2 *Com.* We are glad, Mrs Day, that any occasion brings you hither.

Mrs Day. I thank your honours. I am desirous of doing good, which I know is always acceptable in your eyes.

Mr Day. Come on, son Abel; what have you to say?

Abel. I come unto your honours full of profound contemplations for this gentlewoman.

Arb. 'Slife, he's at's lesson, wench.

[*Aside to* RUTH.

Ruth. Peace—Which whelp opens next? Oh, the wolf is going to bark. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. May it please your honours, I shall presume to inform you, that my son Abel has settled his affections on this gentlewoman, and desires your honour's favour to be shewn unto him in her composition.

2 *Com.* Say you so, Mrs Day? Why, the committee have taken it into their serious and pious consideration, together with Mr Day's good service upon some knowledge that is not fit to communicate.

Mrs Day. That was the letter I invented.

[*Aside.*

2 *Com.* And the composition of this gentlewoman is consigned to Mr Day; that is, I suppose, to Mr Abel, and so consequently to the gentlewoman. You may be thankful, mistress, for such good fortune; your estate's discharged; Mr Day shall have the discharge.

Blunt. O, damn the vultures! [*Aside.*

Care. Peace, man. [*Aside.*

Arb. I am willing to be thankful when I understand the benefit. I have no reason to compound for what's my own; but if I must, if a woman can be a delinquent, I desire to know my public censure, not to be left in private hands.

2 *Com.* Be contented, gentlewoman; the committee does this in favour of you. We understand how easily you can satisfy Mr Abel; you may, if you please, be Mrs Day.

Ruth. And then, good night to all. [*Aside.*

Arb. How, gentlemen! Are you private marriage-jobbers? D'ye make markets for one another?

2 *Com.* How's this, gentlewoman?

Blunt. A brave, noble creature! [*Aside.*

Care. Thou art smitten, Blunt; that other female too, methinks, shoots fire this way. [*Aside.*

Teague. Take care she don't burn your wig.

Mrs Day. I desire your honours to pardon her incessant words; perhaps she doth not imagine the good that is intended her.

2 *Com.* Gentlewoman, the committee, for Mrs Day's sake, passes by your expressions: you may spare your pains; you have the committee's resolution; you may be your own enemy, if you will.

Arb. My own enemy!

Ruth. Pr'ythee, peace, 'tis to no purpose to wrangle here; we must use other ways. [*Aside.*

2 *Com.* Come on, gentlemen! What's your case? [*To the colonels.*

Ruth. Arbella, there's the downright cavalier that came up in the coach with us—On my life, there's a sprightly gentleman with him.

[*While they speak, the colonels pull the papers out, and deliver them.*

Care. Our business is to compound for our estates; of which here are the particulars, which will agree with your own survey.

Teague. And here's the particulars of Teague's estate; forty cows, and the devil a bull amongst them.

Ob. The particulars are right.

Mr Day. Well, gentlemen, the rule is two years purchase; the first payment down, the other at six months end, and the estate to secure it.

Care. Can you afford it no cheaper?

2 *Com.* 'Tis our rule.

Care. Very well; 'tis but selling the rest to pay this, and our more lawful debts.

2 *Com.* But, gentlemen, before you are admitted, you are to take the covenant. You have not taken it yet, have you?

Care. No.

Teague. Upon my shoul, but he has now: I took it for him, and he has taken it from me, that he has.

Ruth. What sport are we now like to have?

2 *Com.* What fellow's that?

Care. A poor simple fellow that serves me.—Peace, Teague.

Teague. Why, did not I knock the fellow down?

2 *Com.* Well, gentlemen, it remains whether you'll take the covenant?

Teague. Why, he has taken it.

Care. This is strange, and differs from your own principle, to impose on other men's consciences.

Mr Day. Pish! we are not here to dispute; we act according to our instructions, and we cannot admit any to compound without taking it; therefore your answer.

Teague. Was it for nothing I took the——

Care. Hold your tongue.—No, we will not take it. Much good may it do them that have swallows large enough; 'twill work one day in their stomachs.

Blunt. The day may come, when those that suffer for their consciences and honour may be rewarded.

Mr Day. Ay, ay, you make an idol of that honour.

Blunt. Our worships then are different: you make that your idol which brings you interest; we can obey that which bids us lose it.

Arb. Brave gentlemen! [*Aside.*

Ruth. I stare at 'em till my eyes ache. [*Aside.*

2 *Com.* Gentlemen, you are men of dangerous spirits. Know, we must keep our rules and instructions, lest we lose what Providence hath put into our hands.

Care. Providence! such as thieves rob by.

2 *Com.* What's that, sir? Sir, you are too bold.

Care. Why, in good sooth, you may give losers leave to speak; I hope your honours, out of your bowels of compassion, will permit us to talk over our departing acres.

Mr Day. It is well you are so merry.

Care. O, ever whilst you live, clear souls make light hearts! faith, would I might ask one question?

2 *Com.* Swear not then.

Care. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours' goods; there's a Rowland for your Oliver.

Teague. There's an Oliver for your Rowland; take that till the pot boils.

Care. My question is only, which of all you is to have our estates; or will you make traitors of them, draw 'em, and quarter 'em?

2 *Com.* You grow abusive.

Blunt. No, no, 'tis only to intreat the honourable persons that will be pleased to be our housekeepers, to keep them in good reparations; we may take possession again without the help of the covenant.

2 *Com.* You'll think better on't, and take this covenant.

Care. We will be as rotten first as their hearts that invented it.

Ruth. 'Slife, Arbella, we'll have these two men; there are not two such again to be had for love nor money.

Mr Day. Well, gentlemen, your follies light upon your own heads; we have no more to say.

Care. Why then, hoist sails for a new world—

Teague. Ay, for old Ireland.

Care. D'ye hear, Blunt; what gentlewoman is that?

Blunt. 'Tis their witty daughter I told thee of.

Care. I'll go speak to them; I'd fain convert that pretty covenanter.

Blunt. Nay, pr'ythee let's go.

Care. Lady, I hope you'll have that good fortune not to be troubled with the covenant.

Arb. If they do, I'll not take it.

Blunt. Brave lady! I must love her against my will—

Care. For you, pretty one, I hope your portion will be enlarged by our misfortunes. Remember your benefactors.

Ruth. If I had all your estates, I could afford you as good a thing.

Care. Without taking the covenant?

Ruth. Yes, but I would invent another oath.

Care. Upon your lips?

Ruth. Nay, I am not bound to discover.

Blunt. Pr'ythee, come! Is this a time to spend in fooling?

Care. Now have I forgot every thing.

Blunt. Come, let's go.

2 *Com.* Gentlemen, void the room.

Care. Sure, 'tis impossible that kite should get that pretty merlin.

Blunt. Come, pr'ythee let's go; these muckworms will have earth enough to stop their mouths with one day.

Care. Pray use our estates husband-like; and so our most honourable bailiffs, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

Teague. Ay, bum-baily rascals——

Mr Day. You are rude. Door-keeper, put 'em forth there.

Por. Come forth, ye there; this is not a place for such as you.

Teague. Devil burn me, but ye are a rascal, that you are.

Por. An' please your honours, this profane Irishman swore an oath at the door, even now, when I would have put him out.

2 *Com.* Let him pay for't.

Por. Here, you must pay, or lie by the heels.

Teague. What, must I pay by the heels? I will not pay by the heels, master; ubbub boo!

Enter CARELESS.

Care. What's the matter?

Teague. This gander-fac'd gag says I must pay by the heels.

Care. What have you done?

Teague. Only swore a bit of an oath.

Care. Here's a shilling; pay for't, and come along.

Teague. Well, I have not curs'd, how much had that been?

Por. That had been but sixpence.

Teague. Och, if I had but one sixpence half-penny in the world, but I would give it for a curse to ease my stomach on you. My money is like a wild colt; I am oblig'd to drive it up in a corner to catch it. I have hold of it by the scruff of the neck. Here mister, there's the shilling for the oath; and there's the sixpence half-penny for you, for the curse, before-hand; and now, my curse, and the curse of Cromwell, light upon you all, you thieves, you.

[*Knocks down the porter, and exit.*

Ruth. Hark ye, Arbella; 'twere a sin not to love these men.

Arb. I am not guilty, Ruth.

Mrs Day. Has this honourable board any other command?

2 *Com.* Nothing farther, good Mrs Day.—Gentlewoman, you have nothing to care for, but be grateful and kind to Mr Abel.

Arb. I desire to know what I must directly trust to, or I will complain.

Mrs Day. The gentlewoman needeth, no doubt; she shall suddenly perceive the good that is intended her, if she does not interpose in her own light.

Mr Day. I pray withdraw; the committee has pass'd their order, and they must now be private.

2 *Com.* Nay, pray, mistress, withdraw. [*Exeunt all but the Committee.*] So, brethren, we have finished this day's work; and let us always keep the bonds of unity unbroken, walking hand in hand, and scattering the enemy.

Mr Day. You may perceive they have spirits never to be reconcil'd; they walk according to nature, and are full of inward darkness.

2 *Com.* It is well, truly, for the good people that they are so obstinate, whereby their estates may of right fall into the hands of the chosen, which truly is a mercy.

Mr Day. I think there remaineth nothing farther, but to adjourn till Monday. Take up the papers there, and bring home to me their honours order for Mrs Arbella's estate. So, brethren, we separate ourselves to our particular endeavours, 'till we join in public on Monday, two of the clock; and so peace remain with you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter Colonel CARELESS, *Colonel* BLUNT, *and Lieutenant* STORY.

Lieu. By my faith, a sad story. I did apprehend this covenant would be the trap.

Care. Never did any rebels fish with such cormorants; no stoppage about their throats; the rascals are all swallow.

Blunt. Now am I ready for any plot: I'll go find some of those agitants, and fill up a blank commission with my name: and if I can but find two or three gather'd together, they are sure of me; I will please myself, however, with endeavouring to cut their throats.

Care. Or do something to make them hang us, that we may but part on any terms.

Enter TEAGUE.

How now, Teague! what says the learned——

Teague. Well then, upon my shoul, the man in the great cloak, with the long sleeves, is mad, that he is.

Care. Mad, Teague!

Teague. Yes, i' faith is he; he said, I was sent to make game of him.

Care. Why, what didst thou say to him?

Teague. I ask'd him if he would take any counsel.

Care. 'Slife, he might well enough think thou mock'dst him. Why, thou shouldst have ask'd him when we might have come for counsel.

Teague. Well, that is all one, is it not? If he would take any counsel, or you would take any counsel, is not that all one then?

Care. Was there ever such a mistake?

Blunt. Pr'ythee never be troubled at this; we are past counsel. If we had but a friend amongst them, that could but slide us by this covenant.

Care. Nothing anger'd me so, as that my old kitchen-stuff acquaintance turn'd her head another way, and seem'd not to know me.

Blunt. How! kitchen-stuff acquaintance!

Care. Mrs Day, that commanded the party in the stage-coach, was my father's kitchen-maid, and in days of yore was called Gillian.

Lieu. Hark ye, colonel; what if you did visit this translated kitchen-maid?

Teague. Well, how is that? a kitchen-maid! where is she now?

Blunt. The lieutenant advises well.

Care. Nay, stay, stay; in the first place, I'll send Teague to her, to tell her I have a little business with her, and desire to know when I may have leave to wait on her.

Blunt. We shall have Teague mistake again.

Teague. I will not mistake the kitchen-maid. Whither must I go now, to mistake that kitchen-maid?

Care. But, d'ye hear, Teague? you must take no notice of that, upon thy life; but, on the contrary, at every word you must say, your ladyship, and your honour: as, for example, when you have made a leg, you must begin thus: my master presents his service to your ladyship, and

having some business with your honour, desires to know when he may have leave to wait upon your ladyship. [TEAGUE *turns his back on the colonel.*] Blockhead, you must not turn your back.

Teague. Oh, no, sir, I always turn my face to a lady——But was she your father's kitchen-maid?

Care. Why, what then?

Teague. Upon my shoul, I shall laugh upon her face, for all I would not have a mind to do it.

Care. Not for a hundred pounds, Teague; you must be sure to set your countenance, and look very soberly, before you begin.

Teague. If I should think then of any kettles, spits, or any thing that will put a mind into my head of a kitchen, I should laugh then, should I not?

Care. Not for a thousand pounds, Teague; thou may'st undo us all.

Teague. Well, I will hope I will not laugh then: I will keep my mouth, if I can, that I will, from running to one side and t'other side. Well, now, where does this Mrs Tay live?

Lieu. Come, Teague, I'll walk along with thee, and shew thee the house, that thou may'st not mistake that, however.

Teague. Shew me the door, and I'll find the ous e myself.

Care. Pr'ythee do, lieutenant.

Teague. O, sir, what is Mrs Tay's name?

Care. Have a care, Teague; thou shalt find us in the Temple. [*Exeunt Lieut. and* TEAGUE.] Now, Blunt, have I another design.

Blunt. What further design canst thou have?

Care. Why, by this means I may chance to see these women again, and get into their acquaintance.

Blunt. With both, man?

Care. 'Slife, thou art jealous; dost love either of 'em?

Blunt. Nay, I cann't tell: all is not as 'twas.

Care. Like a man that is not well, and yet knows not what ails him.

Blunt. Thou art something near the matter: but I'll cure myself with considering that no woman can ever care for me.

Care. And why, pry'thee?

Blunt. Because I can say nothing to them.

Care. The less thou canst say, they'll like thee the better; she'll think 'tis love that has hamstring'd thy tongue. Besides, man, a woman cann't abide any thing in the house should talk, but she and her parrot. What, is it the cavalier girl thou lik'st?

Blunt. Canst thou love any of the other breed?

Care. Not honestly—yet I confess that ill-begotten, pretty rascal never look'd towards me, but she scatter'd sparks as fast as kindling charcoal; thine's grown already to an honest flame. Come, Blunt, when Teague comes we will resolve on something. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ARBELLA *and* RUTH.

Arb. Come now, a word of our own matters. How dost thou hope to get thy estate again?

Ruth. You shall drink first; I was just going to ask you how you would get yours again. You are as fast as if you were under covert-baron.

Arb. But I have more hopes than thou hast.

Ruth. Not a scruple more, if there were but scales that could weigh hopes; for these rascals must be hang'd, before either of us shall get our own. You may eat and drink out of yours, as I do, and be a sojourner with Abel.

Arb. I am hamper'd; but I'll not entangle myself with Mr Abel's conjugal cords—Nay, I am more hamper'd than thou thinkest; for if thou art in as bad a case as I, (you understand me,) hold up thy finger.

Ruth. Behold! Nay, I'll ne'er forsake thee. [RUTH *holds up her finger.*] If I were not smitten, I would persuade myself to be in love, if 'twere but to bear thee company.

Arb. Dear girl! Hark ye, Ruth, the composition-day made an end of all; all's gone.

Ruth. Nay, that fatal day put me into the condition of a compounder too; there was my heart brought under sequestration.

Arb. That day, wench?

Ruth. Yes, that very day, with two or three forcible looks, 'twas driven an inch, at least, out of its old place. Sense or reason cann't find the way to't now.

Arb. That day, that very day? If you and I should like the same man?

Ruth. Fie upon't! as I live, thou mak'st me start. Now, dare not I ask which thou lik'st.

Arb. Would they were now to come in, that we might watch one another's eyes, and discover by signs. I am not able to ask thee neither.

Ruth. Nor I to tell thee. Shall we go ask Lilly which it is?

Arb. Out upon him! Nay, there's no need of stars; we know ourselves, if we durst speak.

Ruth. Pish! I'll speak; if it be the same, we'll draw cuts.

Arb. No, hark ye, Ruth; do you act them both, for you saw their several humours, and then watch my eyes where I appear most concern'd. I cann't dissemble, for my heart.

Ruth. I dare swear that will hinder thee to dissemble, indeed—Come, have at you, then; I'll speak as if I were before the honourable rascals. And first, for my brave blunt colonel, who, hating to take the oath, cry'd out, with a brave scorn, (such as made thee in love, I hope,) hang yourselves, rascals; the time will come, when those that dare be honest, will be rewarded. Don't I act him bravely? Don't I act him bravely?

Arb. O, admirably well! Dear wench, do it once more.

Ruth. Nay, nay, I must do the other now.

Arb. No, no; this once more, dear girl, and I'll act the other for thee.

Ruth. No, forsooth, I'll spare your pains: we are right; no need of cuts; send thee good luck with him I acted; and wish me well with my merry colonel, that shall act his own part.

Arb. And a thousand good lucks attend thee! We have sav'd our blushes admirably well, and reliev'd our hearts from hard duty—But mum; see where the mother comes, and with her, her son, a true exemplification or duplicate of the original Day. Now for a charge.

Enter Mrs DAY *and* ABEL.

Ruth. Stand fair; the enemy draws up.

Mrs Day. Well, Mrs Arbella, I hope you have consider'd enough by this time; you need not use so much consideration for your own good; you may have your estate, and you may have Abel, and you may be worse offer'd—Abel, tell her your mind! ne'er stand shilly shally—Ruth, does she incline, or is she wilful?

Ruth. I was just about the point when your honour interrupted us—One word in your ladyship's ear.

Abel. You see, forsooth, that I am somebody, though you make nobody of me; you see I can prevail; therefore, pray, say what I shall trust to; for I must not stand shilly shally.

Arb. You are hasty, sir.

Abel. I am called upon by important affairs; and therefore I must be bold, in a fair way, to tell you that it lies upon my spirits exceedingly.

Arb. Saffron-posset drink is very good against the heaviness of the spirit.

Abel. Nay, forsooth, you do not understand my meaning.

Arb. You do, I hope, sir; and 'tis no matter, sir, if one of us know it.

Enter TEAGUE.

Teague. Well now, who are all you?

Arb. What's here; an Irish elder, come to examine us all?

Teague. Well, now, what is your names, every one?

Ruth. Arbella, this is a servant to one of the colonels; upon my life, 'tis the Irishman that took the covenant the right way.

Arb. Peace, what should it mean?

Teague. Well, cannot some of you all say nothing, without speaking?

Mrs Day. Why, how now, sauce-box! what would you have? What, have you left your manners without? Go out, and fetch 'em in.

Teague. What should I fetch now?

Mrs Day. D'you know who you speak to, sirrah?

Teague. Yes, I do; and it is little my own mother thought I should speak to the like of you.

Abel. You must not be so saucy unto her honour.

Teague. Well, I will knock you down, if you be so saucy, with my hammer.

Ruth. This is miraculous.

Teague. Is there none of you that I must speak to, now?

Arb. Now, wench, if he should be sent to us. [*Aside.*

Teague. Well, I would have one Mrs Tay speak unto me.

Mrs Day. Well, sirrah, I am she; what's your business?

Teague. O, are you there? With yourself, Mrs Tay—Well, I will look well first, and I will set my face, and tell her my message. [*Aside.*

Ruth. How the fellow begins to mould himself!

Arb. And tempers his chops, like a hound that has lapp'd before his meat was cold enough.

Ruth. He looks as if he had some gifts to pour forth; those are Mr Day's own white eyes, before he begins to say grace. Now for a speech rattling in his kecher, as if his words stumbled in their way.

Teague. Well, now I will tell thee, i'faith. My master, the good Colonel Careless, bid me ask thy good ladyship——Upon my soul, now, the laugh will come upon my mouth in spite of me. [*He laughs always when he says ladyship or honour.*

Mrs Day. Sirrah, sirrah! What, were you sent to abuse me?

Ruth. As sure as can be. [*Aside.*

Teague. I do not abuse thy good honour—I cannot help my laugh now. I will try again, now, I will not think of a kitchen, nor a dripping-pan, nor a mustard-pot—My master would know of your ladyship——

Mrs Day. Did your master send you to abuse me, you rascal? By my honour, sirrah——

Teague. Why do you abuse yourself now, joy?

Mrs Day. How, sirrah! Do I mock myself? This is some Irish traitor.

Teague. I am no traitor, that I am not; I am an Irish rebel. You are cozen'd now.

Mrs Day. Sirrah, sirrah, I will make you know who I am—An impudent Irish rascal!

Abel. He seemeth a dangerous fellow, and of a bold seditious spirit.

Mrs Day. You are a bloody rascal, I warrant ye.

Teague. You are a foolish, brabble-bribble woman, that you are.

Abel. Sirrah, we that are at the head of affairs must punish your sauciness.

Teague. And we that are at the tail of affairs will punish your sauciness.

Mrs Day. Ye rascally varlet, get out of my doors.

Teague. Will not I give you my message then?

Mrs Day. Get you out, rascal.

Teague. I pr'ythee let me tell my message.

Mrs Day. Get you out, I say.

Teague. The devil burn your ladyship, and honourship, and kitchenship. [*Exit.*

Arb. Was there ever such a scene? 'Tis impossible to guess any thing.

Ruth. Our colonels have don't, as sure as

thou livest, to make themselves sport; being all the revenge that is in their power. Look, look, how her honour struts about, like a beast stung with flies.

Mrs Day. How the villain has distemper'd me! Out upon't too, that I have let the rascal go unpunish'd. And you [*To* ABEL] can stand by, like a sheep; run after him then, and stop him. I'll have him laid by the heels, and make him confess who sent him to abuse me. Call help as you go. Make haste, I say. [*Exit* ABEL.

Ruth. 'Slid, Arbella, run after him, and save the poor fellow, for sake's sake; stop Abel, by any means, that he may 'scape.

Arb. Keep his dam off, and let me alone with the puppy. [*Exit.*

Ruth. Fear not.

Mrs Day. 'Uds my life, the rascal has heated me!—Now I think on't, I'll go myself, and see it done—A saucy villain!

Ruth. But I must needs acquaint your honour with one thing first, concerning Mrs Arbella.

Mrs Day. As soon as ever I have done. Is't good news, wench?

Ruth. Most excellent! If you go out, you may spoil all. Such a discovery I have made, that you will bless the accident that anger'd you.

Mrs Day. Quickly then, girl.

Ruth. When you sent Abel after the Irishman, Mrs Arbella's colour came and went in her face; and at last, not able to stay, she slunk away after him, for fear the Irishman should hurt him; she stole away, and blush'd the prettiest!

Mrs Day. I protest he may be hurt indeed. I'll run myself too.

Ruth. By no means, forsooth, nor is there any need on't; for she resolv'd to stop him before he could get near the Irishman. She has done it, upon my life; and if you should go out, you might spoil the kindest encounter that the loving Abel is ever like to have.

Mrs Day. Art sure of this?

Ruth. If you do not find she has stopt him, let me ever have your hatred. Pray credit me.

Mrs Day. I do, I do believe thee. Come, we'll go in where I use to read; there thou shalt tell me all the particulars, and the manner of it. I warrant 'twas pretty to observe.

Ruth. O, 'twas a thousand pities you did not see't: when Abel walk'd away so bravely and foolishly after this wild Irishman, she stole such kind looks from her own eyes; and having robb'd herself, sent them after her own Abel; and then—

Mrs Day. Come, good wench; I'll go in, and hear all at large. It shall be the best tale thou hast told these two days. Come, come; I long to hear all. Abel, for his part, needs no help by this time. Come, good wench. [*Exit.*

Ruth. So far I am right. Fortune, take care for future things. [*Exit.*

Enter Colonel BLUNT, *as taken by Bailiffs.*

Blunt. At whose suit, rascals?

1 *Bail.* You shall know that time enough.

Blunt. Time enough, dogs! Must I wait your leisures?

1 *Bail.* O, you are a dangerous man! 'Tis such traitors as you that disturb the peace of the nation.

Blunt. Take that, rascal. [*Kicking him.*] If I had any thing at liberty, besides my foot, I would bestow it on you.

1 *Bail.* You shall pay dearly for this kick before you are let loose, and give good special bail.—Mark that, my surly companion; we have you fast.

Blunt. 'Tis well, rogues; you caught me conveniently. Had I been aware, I would have made some of your scurvy souls my special bail.

1 *Bail.* O, 'tis a bloody-minded man! I'll warrant ye, this vile cavalier has eat many a child.

Blunt. I could gnaw a piece or two of you, rascals.

Enter Colonel CARELESS.

Care. How is this! Blunt in hold! You catchpole, let go your prey, or—[*Draws, and* BLUNT, *in the scuffle, throws up one of their heels, gets a sword, and helps to drive them off.*

1 *Bail.* Murder, murder!

Blunt. Faith, Careless, this was worth thanks. I was fairly going.

Care. What was the matter, man?

Blunt. Why, an action or two for free quarter, now made trover and conversion. Nay, I believe we shall be sued with an action of trespass for every field we have marched over; and be indicted for riots, for going, at unseasonable hours, above two in a company.

Enter TEAGUE, *running.*

Care. Well, come, let's away.

Teague. Now, upon my shoul, run as I do; the men in red coats are running too, and they cry murder, murder! I never heard such a noise in Ireland in all my life.

Care. 'Slife, we must shift several ways. Farewell. If we 'scape, we meet at night: I shall take heed now.

Teague. Shall I tell Mrs Tay's message?

Care. O, good Teague, no time for messages. [*Exeunt several ways.*

A noise within. Enter Bailiffs and Soldiers.

1 *Bail.* This way, this way! Oh, villains! My neighbour Swash is hurt dangerously. Come, good soldiers, follow, follow. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CARELESS *and* TEAGUE *again.*

Care. I am quite out of breath, and the bloodhounds are in a full cry upon a burning scent: plague on 'em, what a noise the kennels make! What door's this, that graciously stands a little

open? What an ass am I to ask? Teague, scout abroad; if any thing happens extraordinary, observe this door, there you shall find me. Now, by your favour, landlord, as unknown.

[*Exeunt severally.*

Enter Mrs DAY *and* OBADIAH.

Mrs Day. It was well observed, Obadiah, to bring the parties to me first. 'Tis your master's will that I should, as I may say, prepare matters for him. In truth, in truth, I have too great a burthen upon me; yet, for the public good, I am content to undergo it.

Ob. I shall, with sincere care, present unto your honour, from time to time, such negociations as I may discreetly presume may be material for your honour's inspection.

Mrs Day. It will become you so to do. You have the present that came last?

Ob. Yes, an' please your honour; the gentlewoman, concerning her brother's release, hath also sent in a piece of plate.

Mrs Day. It's very well.

Ob. But the man without, about a bargain of the king's land, is come empty.

Mrs Day. Bid him be gone; I'll not speak with him. He does not understand himself.

Ob. I shall intimate so much to him.

[*As* OBADIAH *goes out, Colonel* CARELESS *meets him, and tumbles him back.*

Mrs Day. Why, how now? What rude companion's this? What would you have? What's your business? What's the matter? Who sent you? Who d'you belong to? Who———

Care. Hold, bold, if you mean to be answer'd to all these interrogatories. You see I resolve to be your companion. I am a man; there's no great matter; nobody sent me; nor I belong to nobody. I think I have answer'd to the chief heads.

Mrs Day. Thou hast committed murder, for aught I know. How is't, Obadiah?

Care. Ha! what luck have I, to fall into the territories of my old kitchen acquaintance. I'll proceed upon the strength of Teague's message, though I had no answer. [*Aside.*

Ob. Truly he came forcibly upon me, and I fear has bruised some intellectuals within my stomach.

Mrs Day. Go in, and take some Irish slat, by way of prevention, and keep yourself warm. [*Exit* OBADIAH.] Now, sir, have you any business, that you came in so rudely, as if you did not know who you came to? How came you in, Sir Royster? Was not the porter at the gate?

Care. No, truly; the gate kept itself, and stood gaping, as if it had a mind to speak, and say, I pray come in.

Mrs Day. Did it so, sir? And what have you to say?

Care. Ay, there's the point. Either she does not, or will not know me. What should I say? How dull am I? Pox on't, this wit is like a common friend; when one has need of him, he won't come near one. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. Sir, are you studying for an invention? For aught I know, you have done some mischief, and 'twere fit to secure you.

Care. So, that's well; 'twas pretty to fall into the head quarters of the enemy. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. Nay, 'tis e'en so; I'll fetch those that shall examine you.

Care. Stay, thou mighty states-woman; I did but give you time to see if your memory would but be so honest as to tell you who I am.

Mrs Day. What do you mean, sauce-box?

Care. There's a word yet of thy former employments; that sauce. You and I have been acquainted.

Mrs Day. I do not use to have acquaintance with cavaliers.

Care. Nor I with committee-men's utensils; but *in diebus illis*, you were not honourable, nor I a malignant. Lord, Lord, you are horribly forgetful. Pride comes with godliness and good clothes. What, you think I should not know you because you are disguised with curled hair and white gloves? Alas! I know you as well as if you were in your sabbath-day's cinnamon waistcoat, with a silver edging round the skirt.

Mrs Day. How, sirrah?

Care. And with your fair hands bath'd in lather; or with your fragrant breath driving the fleeting ambergrease off from the waving kitchen-stuff.

Mrs Day. Oh, you are an impudent cavalier! I remember you now indeed; but I'll——

Care. Nay, but hark you, the now honourable, *non obstante* past conditions; did I not send my footman, an Irishman, with a civil message to you? Why all this strangeness, then?

Mrs Day. How, how, how's this! Was't you that sent that rascal to abuse me, was't so?

Care. How now! What, matters grow worse and worse!

Mrs Day. I'll teach you to abuse those that are in authority. Within, there! who's within?

Care. 'Slife, I'll stop your mouth, if you raise an alarm. [*She cries out, he stops her mouth.*

Mrs Day. Stop my mouth, sirrah! whoo, whoo, ho!

Care. Yes, stop your mouth. What, are you good at a who-bub, ha?

Enter RUTH.

Ruth. What's the matter, forsooth?

Mrs Day. The matter! Why, here's a rude cavalier has broke into my house; 'twas he, too, that sent the Irish rascal to abuse me too, within my own walls. Call your father, that he may grant order to secure him. 'Tis a dangerous fellow.

Care. Nay, good, pretty gentlewoman, spare your motion.——What must become of me? Teague has made some strange mistake. [*Aside.*

Ruth. 'Tis he! what shall I do? Now, invention be equal to my love. [*Aside.*] Why, your ladyship will spoil all. I sent for this gentleman, and enjoin'd him secrecy, even to you yourself, till I had made his way. O, fie upon't, I am to

blame; but, in truth, I did not think he would have come these two hours.

Care. I dare swear she did not; I might very probably not have come at all.

Ruth. How came you to come so soon, sir? 'Twas three hours before you appointed.

Care. Hey-day! I shall be made believe I came hither on purpose presently. [*Aside.*

Ruth. 'Twas upon a message of his to me, an' please your honour, to make his desires known to your ladyship, that he had consider'd on it, and was resolv'd to take the covenant, and give you five hundred pounds to make his peace, and bring his business about again, that he may be admitted in his first condition.

Care. What's this?——D'ye hear, pretty gentlewoman?

Ruth. Well, well, I know your mind; I have done your business.

Mrs Day. Oh, his stomach's come down.

Ruth. Sweeten him again, and leave him to me; I warrant the five hundred pounds, and—[*Whispers.*

Care. Now I have found it; this pretty wench has a mind to be left alone with me, at her peril. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. I understand thee—Well, sir, I can pass by rudeness, when I am inform'd there was no intention of it. I leave you and my daughter to beget a right understanding. [*Exit Mrs* DAY.

Care. We should beget sons and daughters sooner. What does all this mean? [*Aside.*

Ruth. I am sorry, sir, that your love for me should make you thus rash.

Care. That's more than you know; but you had a mind to be left alone with me, that's certain.

Ruth. 'Tis too plain, sir; you'd ne'er have run yourself into this danger else.

Care. Nay, now you're out; the danger run after me.

Ruth. You may dissemble.

Care. Why, 'tis the proper business here; but we lose time; you and I are left to beget a right understanding. Come, which way?

Ruth. Whither?

Care. To your chamber or closet.

Ruth. But I am engaged you shall take the covenant.

Care. No, I never swear when I am bid.

Ruth. But you would do as bad.

Care. That's not against my principles.

Ruth. Thank you for your fair opinion, good Signior Principle. There lies your way, sir. However, I will own so much kindness for you, that I repent not the civility I have done, to free you from the trouble you were like to fall into; make me a leg, if you please, and cry, thank you; and so the gentlewoman that desired to be left alone with you, desires to be left alone with herself, she being taught a right understanding of you.

Care. No: I am rivetted; nor shall you march off thus with flying colours. My pretty commander in chief, let us parley a little farther, and but lay down ingenuously the true state of our treaty. The business, in short, is this: we differ seemingly upon two evils, and mine the least, and therefore to be chosen. You had better take me, than I take the covenant.

Ruth. We'll excuse one another.

Care. You would not have me take the covenant, then?

Ruth. No; I did but try you. I forgive your idle looseness for that firm virtue. Be constant to your fair principles, in spite of fortune.

Care. What's this got into petticoats!—But, d'ye hear: I'll not excuse you from my proposition, notwithstanding my release. Come, we are half way to a right understanding—Nay, I do love thee.

Ruth. Love virtue; you have but here and there a patch of it; y'are ragged still.

Care. Are you not the Committee Day's daughter?

Ruth. Yes. What then?

Care. Then am I thankful. I had no defence against thee and matrimony, but thy own father and mother, which are a perfect committee to my own nature.

Ruth. Why, are you sure I would have match'd with a malignant, not a compounder neither?

Care. Nay, I have made thee a jointure against my will. Methinks it were but as reasonable that I should do something for my jointure; but, by the way of matrimony, honestly to increase your generation, this, to tell you truth, is against my conscience.

Ruth. Yet you would beget right understandings.

Care. Yes, I would have 'em all bastards.

Ruth. And me a whore.

Care. That's a coarse name; but 'tis not fit a committee-man's daughter should be too honest, to the reproach of her father and mother.

Ruth. When the quarrel of the nation is reconciled, you and I shall agree: 'till when, sir—

Enter TEAGUE.

Teague. Are you here then? Upon my shoul, the good colonel Blunt is overtaken again now, and carried to the devil, that he is, i'faith now.

Care. How, taken and carried to the devil!

Teague. He desired to go to the devil; I wonder of my shoul he was not afraid.

Care. I understand it now. What mischief's this?

Ruth. You seem troubled, sir.

Care. I have but a life to lose, that I am weary of. Come, Teague.

Ruth. Hold, you shan't go before I know the business. What d'ye talk of?

Care. My friend, my dearest friend, is caught up by rascally bailiffs, and carried to the Devil-tavern. Pray let me go.

Ruth. Stay but a minute, if you have any kindness for me.

Care. Yes, I do love you.

Ruth. Perhaps I may serve your friend.

Enter ARBELLA.

O Arbella, I was going to see you.

Arb. What's the matter?

Ruth. The colonel, which thou lik'st, is taken by bailiffs; there's his friend too, almost distracted. You know the mercy of these times.

Arb. What dost thou tell me? I am ready to sink down!

Ruth. Compose yourself, and help him nobly; you have no way, but to smile upon Abel, and get him to bail him.

Enter ABEL *and* OBADIAH.

Arb. Look where he and Obadiah come; sent hither by Providence——Oh, Mr Abel, where have you been this long time? Can you find of your heart to keep thus out of my sight?

Abel. Assuredly some important affairs constrained my absence, as Obadiah can testify, *bona fide.*

Teague. The devil brake your bones a Friday.

Ob. I can do so, verily, myself, being a material party.

Care. Pox on 'em, how slow they speak.

Teague. Speak faster.

Arb. Well, well, you shall go no more out of my sight; I'll not be satisfied with your *bona fide's.* I have some occasions that call me to go a little way; you shall e'en go with me, and good Obadiah too. You shall not deny me any thing.

Abel. It is not meet I should. I am exceedingly exalted. Obadiah, thou shalt have the best bargain of all my tenants.

Ob. I am thankful.

Care. What may this mean? [*Aside.*

Arb. Ruth, how shall we do to keep thy swift mother from pursuing us?

Ruth. Let me alone: as I go to the parlour, where she sits, big with expectation, I'll give her a whisper, that we are going to fetch the very five hundred pounds.

Arb. How can that be?

Ruth. No question now. Will you march, sir?

Care. Whither?

Ruth. Lord, how dull these men in love are!—Why, to your friend. No more words.

Care. I will stare upon thee, though. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Colonel BLUNT *brought in by Bailiffs.*

1 *Bail.* Ay, ay, we thought how well you'd get bail.

Blunt. Why, you unconscionable rascal, are you angry that I am unlucky, or do you want some fees? I'll perish in a dungeon, before I'll give you a farthing.

1 *Bail.* Choose, choose. Come, along with him.

Blunt. I'll not go your pace neither, rascals; I'll go softly, if it be but to hinder you from taking up some other honest gentleman.

1 *Bail.* Very well, surly sir; we will carry you where you shall not be troubled what pace to walk; you'll find a large bill. Blood is dear.

Blunt. Not yours, is it?—a farthing a pint were very dear for the best blood you have.

Enter ARBELLA, RUTH, ABEL, *Colonel* CARELESS, *and* OBADIAH.

1 *Bail.* How now! are these any of your friends?

Blunt. Never, if you see women; that's a rule.

Arb. [*To* ABEL.] Nay, you need have no scruple, 'tis a near kinsman of mine. You do not think, I hope, that I would let you suffer—You—that must be nearer than a kinsman to me.

Abel. But my mother doth not know it.

Arb. If that be all, leave to me and Ruth; we'll save you harmless: besides, I cannot marry if my kinsman be in prison; he must convey my estate as you appoint; for 'tis all in him: we must please him.

Abel. The consideration of that doth convince me, Obadiah, 'tis necessary for us to set at liberty this gentleman, being a trustee for Mrs Arbella's estate. Tell 'em, therefore, that you and I will bail this gentleman—and—d'ye hear, tell them who I am.

Ob. I shall.—Gentlemen, this is the honourable Mr Abel Day, the first-born of the honourable Mr Day, chairman of the committee of sequestrations; and I myself by name Obadiah, and clerk to the said honourable committee.

1 *Bail.* Well, sir, we know Mr Day, and Mr Abel.

Abel. Yes, that's I; and I will bail this gentleman. I believe you dare not except against the bail: nay, you shall have Obadiah's too, one that the state trusts.

1 *Bail.* With all our hearts, sir.—But there are charges to be paid.

Arb. Here, Obadiah, take this purse and discharge them, and give the bailiffs twenty shillings to drink.

Care. This is miraculous!

1 *Bail.* A brave lady!—I'faith, mistress, we'll drink your health.

Abel. She's to be my wife, as sure as you are here: what say you to that now?

1 *Bail.* [*Aside.*] That's impossible: here's something more in this.—Honourable Mr Abel, the sheriff's deputy is hard by in another room; if you please to go thither, and give your bail, sir.

Abel. Well, shew us the way, and let him know who I am.

[*Exeunt* ABEL, OBADIAH, *and Bailiffs.*

Care. Hark ye, pretty Mrs Ruth, if you were not a committee-man's daughter, and so conse-

quently against monarchy, two princes should have you and that gentlewoman.

Ruth. No, no; you'll serve my turn; I am not ambitious.

Care. Do but swear, then, that thou art not the issue of Mr Day; and, though I know 'tis a lie, I'll be content to be cozened, and believe.

Ruth. Fie, fie; you cann't abide taking of oaths. Look, look, how your friend and mine take aim at one another. Is he smitten?

Care. Cupid has not such another wounded subject; nay, and is vex'd he is in love too. Troth, 'tis partly my own case.

Ruth. Peace! she begins as need requires.

Arb. You are free, sir.

Blunt. Not so free as you think.

Arb. What hinders it?

Blunt. Nothing that I'll tell you.

Arb. Why, sir?

Blunt. You'll laugh at me.

Arb. Have you perceived me apt to commit such a rudeness? Pray let me know it.

Blunt. Upon two conditions you shall know it.

Arb. Well! make your own laws.

Blunt. First, I thank ye, y'have freed me nobly: pray believe it; you have this acknowledgment from an honest heart, one that would crack a string for you; that's one thing.

Arb. Well! the other.

Blunt. The other is only, that I may stand so ready, that I may be gone just as I have told it you; together with your promise, not to call me back: and, upon these terms, I give you leave to laugh when I am gone. Careless, come, stand ready, that, at the sign given, we may vanish together.

Ruth. If you please, sir, when you are ready to start, I'll cry one, two, three, and away.

Blunt. Be pleased to forbear, good smart gentlewoman: you have leave to jeer when I am gone; and I am just going; by your spleen's leave, a little patience.

Arb. Pr'ythee, peace.

Ruth. I shall contain, sir.

Blunt. That's much for a woman to do.

Arb. Now, sir, perform your promise.

Blunt. Careless, have you done with your woman?

Care. Madam——

Blunt. Nay, I have thanked her already: pr'ythee no more of that dull way of gratitude. Stand ready, man: yet nearer the door. So, now my misfortune that I promised to discover is, that I love you above my sense or reason. So farewell, and laugh. Come, Careless.

Care. Ladies, our lives are yours; be but so kind as to believe it, till you have something to command. [*Exeunt.*

Ruth. Was there ever such humour?

Arb. As I live, his confession shews nobly.

Ruth. It shews madly, I am sure. An ill-bred fellow! not endure a woman to laugh at him!

Arb. He's honest, I dare swear.

Ruth. That's more than I dare swear for my colonel.

Arb. Out upon him.

Ruth. Nay, 'tis but want of a good example; I'll make him so.

Arb. But, d'ye hear, Ruth, we were horribly to blame, that we did not enquire where they lodged, under pretence of sending to them about their own business.

Ruth. Why, thy whimsical colonel discharged himself off like a gun; there was no time, between the flashing in the pan and the going off, to ask a question. But, hark ye, I have an invention upon the old account of the five hundred pounds, which shall make Abel send Obadiah to look 'em.

Arb. Excellent! the trout Abel will bite immediately at that bait. The message shall be as from his master, Day, senior, to come and speak with him; they'll think presently 'tis about their composition, and come certainly. In the mean time, we'll prepare them with counter-expectations.

Enter ABEL *and* OBADIAH.

Ruth. Peace! see where Abel and the gentle 'squire of low degree, Obadiah, approach, having newly entered themselves into bonds.

Arb. Which I'll be sure to tell his mother, if he be ever more troublesome.

Ruth. And that he's turned an arrant cavalier, by bailing one of the brood.

Abel. I have, according to your desires, given freedom to your kinsman and trustee. I suppose he doth perceive that you may have power in right of me.

Arb. Good Mr Abel, I am sincerely beholden to you, and your authority.

Ruth. O, fie upon't, brother, I did forget to acquaint you with a business before the gentlemen went. O me, what a sieve-like memory have I! 'Twas an important affair too.

Abel. If you discover it to me, I shall render you my opinion upon the whole.

Ruth. The two gentlemen have repented of their obstinacy, and would now present five hundred pounds to your good honourable mother to stand their friend, that they may be permitted to take the covenant; and we, negligent we, have let them go, before we knew where to send to them.

Abel. That was the want of being us'd to important affairs. It is ill to neglect the accepting of their conversion, together with their money.

Ruth. Well, there is but one way: do you send Obadiah, in your father's name, to desire them both to come to his house about some business that will be for their good, but no more; for then they'll take it ill; for they enjoined us secrecy; and when they come, let us alone: Obadiah may enquire them out.

Ob. The bailiffs did say they were gone to the devil.

Abel. Hasten thither, good Obadiah, as if you had met my honourable father, and desire them

to come unto his house, about an important affair, that is for their good.

Ob. I shall use expedition. [*Exit.*

Abel. And we will hasten home, lest the gentlemen should be before us, and not know how to address their offers; and then we will hasten our being united in the bonds of matrimony.

Arb. Soft and fair goes far. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the two Colonels and TEAGUE, *as at the Tavern.*

Care. Did ever man get away so craftily from the thing he lik'd? Terrible business! afraid to tell a woman what she desired to hear. I pray heartily that the boys do not come to the knowledge of thy famous retreat; we shall be followed by those small birds, as you have seen an owl pursued.

Blunt. I shall break some of their wings then.

Care. To leave a handsome woman; a woman that came to be bound body for body for thee; one that does that which no woman will hardly do again.

Blunt. What's that?

Care. Love thee, and thy blunt humour; a mere chance, man. Come, Teague, give us a song.

Teague. I am a cup too low.

Care. Here, then. [*Gives him a glass.*

Teague. I should like to wet 'tother eye.

Care. Here.

SONG *by* TEAGUE.

Last Patrick-mass night, 'bove all days in the year,
I set out for London before I got there:
But when I took leave of my own natural shore,
O, whillil-a-lu, I did screech, bawl, and roar.

I did wake in the morning, while yet it was night,
And cou'd not see one bit of land, but was quite out of sight;
So, with tumbling and tossing, and jolting poor Teague,
My stomach was sea-sick in less than a league.

At Chester, to show my high birth and great mind,
I took a place in the coach, but walk'd in it behind;
The seas they did roar, and the winds were uncivil,
And, upon my soul, I thought we were all blown to the devil.

At Coventry next, where you see peeping Tom,
Who was kill'd for a look at the duchess's bum;
But when her grace rid on her saddle all bare,
Devil burn me, no wonder that old Snob did stare.

Blunt. You practise your wit to no purpose; I am not to be persuaded to lie still, like a jack-a-lent, to be cast at; I had rather be a whisp hung up for a woman to scold at, than a fix'd lover for 'em to point at. Your squib began to hiss.

Enter OBADIAH.

Care. Peace, man; here's Jupiter's Mercury. Is his message to us, trow?

Ob. Gentlemen, you are opportunely overtaken and found out.

Blunt. How's this?

Ob. I come unto you in the name of the honourable Mr Day, who desires to speak with you both about some important affair, which is conducing for your good.

Blunt. What train is this?

Care. Peace, let us not be rash.—Teague!

Teague. Eh!

Care. Were it not possible that you could entertain this fellow in the next room till he were pretty drunk? [*Aside.*

Teague. I warrant you, I will make him and myself too drunk, for thy sweet sake.

Care. Be sure, Teague.—Some business, that will take us up a very little time to finish, makes us desire your patience till we dispatch it. In the mean time, sir, do us the favour as to call for a glass of sack in the next room: Teague shall wait upon you, and drink your master's health.

Ob. It needeth not; nor do I use to drink healths.

Care. None but your master's, sir, and that by way of remembrance.

Ob. We, that have the affairs of state under our tuition, cannot long delay; my presence may be required for carrying on the work.

Care. Nay, sir, it shall not exceed above a quarter of an hour; perhaps we'll wait upon you to Mr Day presently. Pray, sir, drink but one glass or two; we would wait upon you ourselves, but that would hinder us from going with you.

Ob. Upon that consideration I shall attend a little.

Care. Go, wait upon him—Now, Teague, or never.

Teague. I will make him so drunk as can be, upon my shoul. [*Exeunt* TEAGUE *and* OBADIAH.

Blunt. What a devil should this message mean?

Care. 'Tis too plain: this cream of committee rascals, who has better intelligence than a state-secretary, has heard of his son Abel's being hamper'd in the cause of the wicked, and in revenge would entice us to perdition.

Blunt. If Teague could be so fortunate as to make him drunk, we might know all.

Care. If the close-hearted rogue will not be open-mouth'd, we'll leave him pawn'd for all our scores, and stuff his pockets with blank commissions.

Blunt. Only fill up one with his master's name.

Care. And another with his wife's name for adjutant-general, together with a bill of ammunition hid under Day's house, and make it be digged down with scandal of delinquency. A rascal, to think to invite us into Newgate!

Blunt. Well, we must resolve what to do.

Care. I have a fancy come into my head, that may produce an admirable scene.

Blunt. Come, let's hear.

Care. 'Tis upon supposition that Teague makes him drunk; and, by the way, 'tis a good omen that we have no sober apparition in that wavering posture of frailty; we'll send him home in a sedan, and cause him to be delivered in that good-natured condition to the ill-natured rascal his master.

Blunt. It will be excellent. How I pray for Teague to be victorious!

Enter Musician.

Mus. Gentlemen, will you have any music?

Blunt. Pr'ythee, no; we are out of tune.

Care. Pish! we never will be out of humour.

Enter TEAGUE *and* OBADIAH *drunk.*

See and rejoice where Teague with laurel comes!

Blunt. And the vanquished Obadiah, with nothing fixed about him but his eyes.

Teague. Well now, upon my shoul, Mr Obadiah sings as well as the man now. Come, then, will you sing an Irish song after me?

Ob. I will sing Irish for the king now.

Teague. I will sing for the king as well as you. Hark you now!

[*He sings an Irish song, and* OBADIAH *tries.*

SONG.

Oh, Teady Foley, you are my darling,
You are my looking-glass, both night and morning;
I had rather have you without a farthing,
Than Bryan Gaulichar, with his house and garden. La, ral, lidy.

O, Norah, agra, I do not doubt you,
And for that reason I kiss and mouth you;
And if there was ten and twenty about you,
Devil burn me, if I wou'd go without you. La, ral, lidy.

Ob. That is too hard stuff; I cannot do these and these material matters.

Teague. Here now, we will take some snuff for the king—So, there, lay it upon your hand; put one of your noses to it now; so, snuff now. Upon my shoul, Mr Obadiah Committee will make a brave Irishman. Put this in your other nose.

Ob. I will snuff for the king no more. Good Mr Teague, give me some more sack, and sing English for my money.

Teague. I will tell you that Irish is as good, and better too. Come, now, we will dance. Can you play an Irish tune?

[*Dance;* OBADIAH *tumbles down.*

Teague. Obid, Obid! upon my soul I believe he's dead.

Care. Dead!

Teague. Dead drunk. Poor Obid is sick, and I will mull him some wine—I will put some spice in't. [*Puts some snuff into the funnel.*] Now I will howl over him as they do in Ireland: Oh, oh, oh.

Care. Peace, Teague, you'll alarm the enemy.—Here's a shilling; call a chair, and let them carry him in this condition to his kind master. If you meet the ladies, say we would speak with them at the lieutenant's.

Teague. Give me the thirteen, and I will give him an Irish sedan.

Care. How's that?

Teague. This way.

[*Takes him by the heels, and draws him off.*

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Mr DAY *and Mrs* DAY.

Mrs Day. Dispatch quickly, I say, and say I said it; many things fall between the lip and the cup.

Mr Day. Nay, duck, let thee alone for counsel. Ah, if thou hadst been a man!

Mrs Day. Why, then you would have wanted a woman, and a helper too.

Mr Day. I profess so I should, and a notable one too, though I say't before thy face, and that's no ill one.

Mrs Day. Come, come, you are wand'ring from the matter: dispatch the marriage, I say, whilst she is thus taken with our Abel. Women are uncertain.

Mr Day. How if she should be coy?

Mrs Day. You are at your *if's* again; if she be foolish, tell her plainly what she must trust to: no Abel, no land. Plain dealing's a jewel. Have you the writings drawn, as I advised you, which she must sign?

Mr Day. Ay, I warrant you, duck; here, here they be. Oh, she has a brave estate!

Mrs Day. What news you have!

Mr Day. Look you, wife——

[DAY *pulls out writings, and lays out his keys.*

Mrs Day. Pish! teach your grannum to spin; let me see.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. May it please your honour, your good neighbour Zachariah is departing this troublesome life: he has made your honour his executor, but cannot depart till he has seen your honours.

Mr Day. Alas! alas! a good man will leave us. Come, good duck, let us hasten. Where is Obadiah, to usher you?

Mrs Day. Why, Obadiah!—A varlet, to be out of the way at such a time; truly he moveth my wrath. Come, husband, along; I'll take Abel in his place. [*Exeunt.*

Enter RUTH *and* ARBELLA.

Ruth. What's the meaning of this alarm? There's some carrion discover'd; the crows are all gone upon a sudden.

Arb. The she Day call'd most fiercely for Obadiah. Look here, Ruth, what have they left behind?

Ruth. As I live, it is the Day's bunch of keys, which he always keeps so closely:——well——if thou hast any mettle, now's the time.

Arb. To do what.

Ruth. To fly out of Egypt.

Enter ABEL.

Arb. Peace, we are betray'd else; as sure as can be, wench, he's come back for the keys.

Ruth. We'll forswear 'em in confident words, and no less confident countenances.

Abel. An important affair hath call'd my honourable father and mother forth, and in the absence of Obadiah I am enforced to attend their honours; and therefore I conceiv'd it right and meet to acquaint you with it, lest, in my absence, you might have apprehended that some mischance had befallen my person: therefore I desire you to receive consolation: and so I bid you heartily farewell. [*Exit.*

Arb. Given from his mouth this 10th of April. —He put me in a cruel fright.

Ruth. As I live, I'm all over in such a dew as hangs about a still when 'tis first set a going; but this is better and better: there never was such an opportunity to break prison. I know the very places, the holes in his closet, where the composition of your estate lies, and where the deeds of my own estate lie. I have cast my eye upon them often, when I have gone up to him on errands, and to call him to dinner.—If I miss, hang me.

Arb. But whither shall we go?

Ruth. To a friend of mine, and of my father's, that lives near the Temple, and will harbour us; fear not; and so set up for ourselves, and get our colonels.

Arb. Nay, the mischief that I have done, and the condition we are in, makes me as ready as thou art. Come, let's about it.

Ruth. Stay; do you stand centinel here. That's the closet window; I'll call for thee, if I need thee; and be sure to give notice of any news of the enemy. [*Exit.*

Arb. I warrant thee.—May but this departing brother have so much string of life left him, as may tie this expecting Day to his bed-side till we have committed this honest robbery.—Hark! what's that—this apprehension can make a noise when there is none.

Ruth. I have 'em, I have 'em; nay, the whole covey, and his seal at arms, bearing a dog's leg. [*Above.*

Arb. Come, make haste then.

Ruth. As I live, here's a letter counterfeited from the king, to the rascal his rebellious subject Day, with a remembrance to his discreet wife. Nay, what dost thou think these are? I'll but cast my eye upon these papers, that were schismatical, and lay in separation: What dost think they are?

Arb. I cann't tell. Nay, pr'ythee come away.

Ruth. Out upon the precise baboon! they are letters from two wenches; one for an increase of salary, to maintain his unlawful issue; another from a wench that had more conscience than he, and refus'd to take the physic that he prescrib'd to take away a natural tympany.

Arb. Nay, pr'ythee dispatch.

Ruth. Here be abundance more. Come, run up, and help me carry 'em. We'll take the whole index of his rogueries: we shall be furnish'd with such arms, offensive and defensive, that we shall never need sue to him for a league. Come, make haste.

Arb. I come.

Enter TEAGUE, *with* OBADIAH *on his back.*

Teague. Long life to you, madam; my master is at Lieutenant Story's, and wants to speak to you, and that dear creature too.

Arb. and Ruth. Conduct us to him.

Teague. Oh, that I will—Come along, and I will follow you. [*Exeunt all but* OBADIAH.

Ob. Some small beer, good Mr Teague.

Enter, as returned, Mr DAY, *Mrs* DAY, *and* ABEL.

Mr Day. He made a good end, and departed as unto sleep.

Mrs Day. I'll assure you his wife took on grievously: I do not believe she'll marry this half year.

Mr Day. He died full of exhortation. Ha, duck, shouldst be sorry to lose me?

Mrs Day. Lose you! I warrant you you'll live as long as a better thing—Ah, Lord, what's that? [OBADIAH *sings.*

Mr Day. How now! what's this? How!—— Obadiah—and in a drunken distemper assuredly!

Mrs Day. O, fie upon't! who would have believ'd that we should have liv'd to have seen Obadiah overcome with the creature!—Where have you been, sirrah?

Ob. D—d—drinking the ki—ki—king's health.

Mr Day. O terrible! some disgrace put upon us, and shame brought within our walls. I'll go lock up my neighbour's will, and come down and shew him a reproof.——How——how——I cannot feel my keys——nor——[*He feels in his pockets, and leaps up.*]——I hear 'em jingle.—Didst thou see my keys, duck?

Mrs Day. Duck me no ducks.——I see your keys! see a fool's head of your own! Had I kept them, I warrant they had been forth-coming. You are so slappish, you throw 'em up and down at your tail. Why don't you go look if you have not left them in the door?

Mr Day. I go, I go, duck. [*Exit.*

Mrs Day. Here, Abel, take up this fallen creature, who has left his uprightness; carry him to a bed, and when he is return'd to himself, I will exhort him.

Abel. He is exceedingly overwhelmed. [*Goes to lift him up.*

Ob. Stand away, I say, and give me some sack, that I may drink a health to the king. [*Sings Teady Foley.*] Where's Mr Teague?

Enter Mr DAY.

Mr Day. Undone, undone! robb'd, robb'd! the doors left open, and all my writings and papers stolen! Undone, undone!—Ruth, Ruth!

Mrs Day. Why, Ruth, I say! Thieves, thieves!

Enter Servant.

Serv. What's the matter, forsooth? Here has been no thieves: I have not been a minute out of the house.

Mrs Day. Where's Ruth and Mrs Arbella?

Serv. I have not seen them a pretty while.

Mr Day. 'Tis they have robb'd me, and taken away the writings of both their estates. Undone, undone!

Mrs Day. This came with staying for you, [*To* ABEL] coxcomb; we had come back sooner else: you slow drone, we must be undone for your dullness.

Ob. Be not in wrath.

Mrs Day. I'll wrath you, ye rascal, you. I'll teach you, you drunken rascal, and you sober dull man.

Ob. Your feet are swift and violent; their motion will make them fume.

Mrs Day. D'ye lie too, ye drunken rascal?

Mr Day. Nay, patience, good duck, and let's lay out for these women; they are the thieves.

Mrs Day. 'Twas you that left your keys upon the table to tempt them: ye need cry, good duck, be patient. Bring in the drunken rascal, ye booby: when he is sober, he may discover something. Come, take him up; I'll have 'em hunted. [*Exeunt Mr and Mrs* DAY.

Abel. I rejoice yet, in the midst of my sufferings, that my mistress saw not my rebukes. Come, Obadiah, I pray raise yourself upon your feet, and walk.

Ob. Have you taken the covenant? That's the question.

Abel. Yea.

Ob. And will you drink a health to the king? That's t'other question.

Abel. Make not thyself a scorn.

Ob. Scorn in my face! Void, young Satan.

Abel. I pray you walk in; I shall be assisting.

Ob. Stand off, and you shall perceive, by my steadfast going, that I am not drunk. Look ye, now—so, softly, softly; gently, good Obadiah, gently and steadily, for fear it should be said that thou art in drink. So, gently and uprightly, Obadiah. [*He moves his legs, but stands still.*

Abel. You do not move.

Ob. Then do I stand still, as fast as you go.

Enter Mrs DAY.

Mrs Day. What, stay all day! There's for you, sir; [*To* ABEL] you are a sweet youth to leave in trust. Along, you drunken rascal; [*To* OBADIAH.] I'll set you both forward.

Ob. The Philistines are upon us, and Day has broke loose from darkness; high keeping has made her fierce. [*She beats them off.*

Mrs Day. Out, you drunken rascal: I'll make you move, you beast. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter Bookseller and Bailiffs, having laid hold on TEAGUE.

Book. Come along, sir; I'll teach you to take covenants.

Teague. Will you teach me then? Did not I take it then? Why will you teach me now?

Book. You shall pay dearly for the blows you struck me, my wild Irish; by St Patrick you shall.

Teague. What have you now to do with St. Patrick? he will scorn your covenant.

Book. I'll put you, sir, where you shall have worse liquor than your bonny-clabber.

Teague. Bonny-clabber! by my gossip's hand, now, you are a rascal if you do not love bonny-clabber; and I will break your pate if you will not let me go to my master.

Book. O, you are an impudent rascal. Come, away with him.

Enter Colonel CARELESS.

Care. How now!—hold, my friend; whither do you carry my servant?

Book. I have arrested him, sir, for striking me, and taking away my books.

Care. What has he taken away?

Book. Nay, the value of the thing is not much; 'twas the covenant, sir.

Teague. Well, I did take the covenant, and my master took it from me; and we have taken the covenant then, have we not?

Care. Here, honest fellow; here's more than thy covenant's worth; here, bailiffs, here's for you to drink.

Book. Well, sir, you seem an honest gentleman; for your sake, and in hopes of your custom, I release him.

1 *Bail.* Thank ye, noble sir.

[*Exeunt Book. and Bailiffs.*

Care. Farewell, my noble friends——so——d'ye hear, Teague, pray take no more covenants.—Have you paid the money I sent you with?

Teague. Yes, but I will carry no more, look you there now.

Care. Why, Teague?

Teague. God sa' my shoul now, I shall run away with it.

Care. Pish! thou art too honest.

Teague. That I am too, upon my shoul now; but the devil is not honest, that he is not; he would not let me alone when I was going; but he made me go to this little long place, and t'other little long place, and upon my shoul was

carrying me to Ireland; for he made me go by a dirty place like a lough now; and therefore I know now it was the way to Ireland. Then I would stand still, and then he would make me go on; and then I would go to one side, and he would make me go to t'other side; and then I got a little farther, and did run then; and upon my shoul the devil could not catch me; and then I did pay the money: but I will carry no money, that I will not.

Care. But thou shalt, Teague, when I have more to send; thou art proof now against temptation.

Teague. Well, then, if you send me with money again, and if I do not come to thee upon the time, the devil will make me be gone then with the money.—Here's a paper for thee; 'tis a quit way indeed.

Care. That's well said, Teague.— [*Reads.*

Enter Mr DAY, OBADIAH, *and Soldiers.*

Ob. See, sir, Providence hath directed us; there is one of them that clothed me with shame, and the most maliguant amongst the wicked.

Mr Day. Soldiers, seize him. I charge him with treason! Here's a warrant to the keeper, as I told you.

1st Sol. Nay, no resistance.

Care. What's the matter, rascals?

Mr Day. You shall know that, to your cost, hereafter.—Away with him.

Care. Teague, tell 'em I shall not come home to-night. I am engag'd.

Teague. I pr'ythee ben't engag'd.

Care. Gentlemen, I am guilty of nothing, that I know of.

Mr Day. That will appear, sir.—Away with him.

Teague. What will you do with my master now?

Mr Day. Be quiet, sir, or you shall go with him.

Teague. That I will, for all you, you old fool.

Care. Teague, come hither.

Teague. Sir?

Care. Here, take this key, open my bureau, and burn all the papers you find there; and here, burn this letter.

Teague. Pray, give me that pretty, clean letter, to send to my mother.

Care. No, no; be sure to do as I tell you.

Mr Day. Away with him. We will be aveng'd on the scorner; and I'll go home, and tell my duck this part of my good fortune. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Chairmen, with Sedans; Women come out.

Ruth. So far we are right.—Now, honest fellow, step over, and tell the two gentlemen, that we two women desire to speak with them.

Enter Colonel BLUNT *and Lieutenant.*

Chair. See, mistress, here's one of them.

Ruth. That's thy colonel, Arbella; catch him quickly, or he'll fly again.

Arb. What should I do?

Ruth. Put forth some good words, as they use to shake oats, when they go to catch a skittish jade.—Advance.

Arb. Sir.

Blunt. Lady?—'Tis she.

Arb. I wish, sir, that my friend and I had some conveniency of speaking to you; we now want the assistance of some noble friend.

Blunt. Then I am happy:—Bring me but to do something for you. I would have my actions talk, not I. My friend will be here immediately; I dare speak for him too—Pardon my last confusion; but what I told you was as true as if I had staid—

Ruth. To make affidavit of it.

Blunt. Good, over-charg'd gentlewoman, spare me but a little.

Arb. Pr'ythee, peace. Canst thou be merry, and we in this condition?—Sir, I do believe you noble, truly worthy. If we might withdraw any whither out of sight, I would acquaint you with the business.

Lieu. My house, ladies, is at that door, where both the colonels lodge. Pray, command it. Colonel Careless will immediately be here.

Enter TEAGUE.

Teague. He will not come: that commit rogue Tay has got him, with men in red coats, and he is gone to prison here, below this street. He would not let me go with him, i'faith, but made me come till thee now.

Ruth. O, my heart!—Tears, by your leave, a while.—[*Wipes her eyes.*]—D'ye hear, Arbella; here, take all the trinkets, only the bait that I'll use: accept of this gentleman's house; there let me find thee: I'll try my skill—Nay, talk not. [*Exit.*

Blunt. Careless in prison! Pardon me, madam; I must leave you for a little while: pray be confident; this honest friend of mine will use you with all respects till I return.

Arb. What do you mean to do, sir?

Blunt. I cannot tell: yet I must attempt something. You shall have a sudden account of all things. You say you dare believe: pray be as good as your word: and whatever accident befals me, know I love you dearly. Why do you weep?

Arb. Do not run yourself into a needless danger.

Blunt. How! d'ye weep for me? Pray let me see. Never woman did so before, that I know of. I am ravish'd with it. The round gaping earth ne'er suck'd showers so greedily as my heart drinks these. Pray, if you love me, be but so good and kind as to confess it.

Arb. Do not ask what you may tell yourself.

Blunt. I must go; honour and friendship call me. Here, dear lieutenant; I never had a jewel but this; use it as right ones should be used; do not breathe upon it, but gaze, as I do—hold—one word more. The soldier that you often talk'd of to me is still honest?

Lieu. Most perfectly.

Blunt. And I may trust him?

Lieu. With your life.

Blunt. Enough—Pray, let me leave my last looks fix'd upon you——So; I love you, and am honest.—Be careful, good lieutenant, of this treasure—she weeps still—I cannot go, and yet I must. [*Exit.*

Lieu. Madam, pray let my house be honoured with you. Be confident of all respect and faith.

Arb. What uncertainties pursue my love and fortune! [*Exeunt.*

Enter RUTH, *with a Soldier.*

Ruth. Come, give me the bundle:—so; now the habit.—'Tis well: there's for your pains. Be secret, and wait where I appointed you.

Sol. If I fail, may I die in a ditch. [*Exit.*

Ruth. Now for my wild colonel. First, here's a note, with my Lady Day's seal to it, for his release; if that fails, (as he that shoots at these rascals must have two strings to his bow,) then here's my red-coat's skin, to disguise him, and a string, to draw up a ladder of cords, which I have prepared against it grows dark. One of them will hit, sure. I must have him out; and I must have him, when he is out. I have no patience to expect.—Within there—ho!—

Enter Keeper.

Ruth. Have not you a prisoner, sir, in your custody; one Colonel Careless?

Keep. Yes, mistress; and committed by your father, Mr Day.

Ruth. I know it; but there was a mistake in it. Here's a warrant for his delivery, under his hand and seal.

Keep. I would willingly obey it, mistress; but there's a general order come from above, that all the king's party should be kept close, and none releas'd, but by the state's order.

Ruth. This goes ill.—May I speak with him, sir?

Keep. Very freely, mistress: there's no order to forbid any to come to him. To say truth, 'tis the most pleasantest gentleman—I'll call him forth. [*Exit.*

Ruth. O' my conscience, every thing must be in love with him. Now for my last hopes; if this fail, I'll use the ropes myself.

Enter Keeper and CARELESS.

Care. Mr Day's daughter speak with me?

Keep. Ay, sir, there she is. [*Exit.*

Ruth. O, sir, does the name of Mr Day's daughter trouble you? You love the gentlewoman, but hate his daughter.

Care. Yes, I do love the gentlewoman you speak of most exceedingly.

Ruth. And the gentlewoman loves you. But what luck this is, that Day's daughter should ever be with her, to spoil all!

Care. Not a whit, one way: I have a pretty room within, dark, and convenient.

Ruth. For what?

Care. For you and I to give counter-security for our kindness to one another.

Ruth. But Mr Day's daughter will be there too.

Care. 'Tis dark; we'll ne'er see her.

Ruth. You care not who you are wicked with. Methinks a prison should tame you.

Care. Why, d'ye think a prison takes away blood and sight? As long as I am so qualified, I am touch-wood; and whenever you bring fire, I shall fall a-burning.

Ruth. And you would quench it.

Care. And you shall kindle it again.

Ruth. No, you will be burnt out at last, burnt to a coal, black as dishonest love.

Care. Is this your business? Did you come to disturb my contemplations with a sermon? Is this all?

Ruth. One thing more—I love you, it's true; but I love you honestly. If you know how to love me virtuously, I'll free you from prison, and run all fortunes with you.

Care. Yes, I could love thee all manner of ways; if I could not, freedom were no bait; were it from death, I should despise your offer, to bargain for a lie—But—

Ruth. Oh, noble!—But what?

Care. The name of that rascal that got thee. Yet I lie too; he ne'er got a limb of thee. Pox on't, thy mother was as unlucky to bear thee. But how shall we salve that? Take off but these encumbrances, and I'll purchase thee in thy smock; but to have such a flaw in my title——

Ruth. Can I help nature?

Care. Or I honour? Why, hark you, now; do but swear me into a pretence; do but betray me with an oath, that thou wert not begot on the body of Gillian, my father's kitchen-maid.

Ruth. Who's that?

Care. Why, the honourable Mrs Day, that now is.

Ruth. Will you believe me, if I swear?

Care. Ay, that I will, though I know all the while 'tis not true.

Ruth. I swear, then, by all that's good, I am not their daughter.

Care. Poor, kind, perjured, pretty one, I am beholden to thee. Wouldst damn thyself for me?

Ruth. You are mistaken. I have try'd you fully. You are noble, and I hope you love me. Be ever firm to virtuous principles. My name is not so godly a one as Ruth, but plain Anne, daughter to Sir Basil Thoroughgood; one, perhaps, that you have heard of, since in the world he has still had so loud and fair a character. 'Tis too long to tell you how this Day got me, an infant, and my estate into his power, and made me pass for his own daughter, my father dying when I was but two years old. This I knew but lately, by an unexpected meeting of an ancient servant of my father's. But, two hours since, Arbella and I found an opportunity of stealing away all the writings that belong'd to my estate,

and her composition. In our flight, we met your friend, with whom I left her, as soon as I had intelligence of your misfortune, to try to get your liberty; which if I can do, you have your estate, for I have mine.

Care. Thou more than——

Ruth. No, no, no raptures at this time. Here's your disguise, purchas'd from a true-hearted red-coat. Here's a bundle. Let this line down when 'tis almost dark, and you shall draw up a ladder of ropes. If the ladder of ropes be done sooner, I'll send it by a soldier that I dare trust, and you may. Your window's large enough. As soon as you receive it, come down; if not, when 'tis dark, let down your line, and at the bottom of the window you shall find yours, more than her own, not Ruth, but Anne.

Care. I'll leap into thy arms—

Ruth. So you may break your neck. If you do, I'll jump too. But time steals on our words —Observe all I have told you. So, farewell.

Care. Nay, as the good fellows use to say, let us not part with dry lips——One kiss.

Ruth. Not a bit of me, 'till I am all yours.

Care. Your hand, then, to shew I am grown reasonable. A poor compounder.

Ruth. Pish! there's a dirty glove upon't.—

Care. Give me but any naked part, and I'll kiss it as a snail creeps, and leave sign where my lips slid along——

Ruth. Good snail, get out of your hole first: think of your business. So, fare——

Care. Nay, pr'ythee be not asham'd that thou art loth to leave me. 'Slid! I am a man; but I'm as arrant a rogue as thy quondam father Day, if I could not cry to leave thee a brace of minutes.

Ruth. Away; we grow foolish—farewell—yet be careful——Nay, go in.

Care. Do you go first.

Ruth. Nay, fie, go in.

Care. We'll fairly then divide the victory, and draw off together.—So—I will have the last look.

[*Exeunt severally, looking at one another.*

Enter Colonel BLUNT *and Soldier.*

Blunt. No more words. I do believe, nay, I know thou art honest. I may live to thank thee better.

Sol. I scorn any encouragement to love my king, or those that serve him. I took pay under these people with a design to do him service: the lieutenant knows it.

Blunt. He has told me so. No more words. Thou art a noble fellow.—Thou art sure his window's large enough?

Sol. Fear it not.

Blunt. Here, then, carry him this ladder of ropes. So; now, give me the coat. Say not a word to him, but bid him dispatch, when he sees the coast clear. He shall be waited for at the bottom of his window. Give him thy sword too, if he desires it.

Sol. I'll dispatch it instantly; therefore get to your place. [*Exit.*

Blunt. I warrant ye.

Enter TEAGUE.

Teague. Have you done every thing, then? By my shoul, now, yonder is the man with the hard name; that man, now, that I made drunk for thee; Mr Tay's rascal: he is coming along there behind; now, upon my shoul, that he is.

Blunt. The rascal comes for some mischief. Teague, now or never play the man.

Teague. How should I be a man, then?

Blunt. Thy master is never to be got out, if this rogue gets hither; meet him therefore, Teague, in the most winning manner thou canst, and make him once more drunk, and it shall be called the Second Edition of Obadiah, put forth with Irish notes upon him: and if he will not go drink with thee——

Teague. I will carry him upon my back, if he will not go; and if he will not be drunk, I will cut his throat then, that I will, for my sweet master now, that I will.

Blunt. Dispatch, good Teague; and dispatch him too, if he will not be conformable; and if thou canst but once more be victorious, bring him in triumph to Lieutenant Story's; there shall be the general rendezvous. Now or never, Teague.

Teague. I warrant you I will get drink into his pate, or I will break it for him, that I will, I warrant you. He shall not come after you now.

Blunt. Good luck go with thee! [*Exit* TEAGUE.] The fellow's faithful and stout.—That fear's over.—Now to my station. [*Exit.*

Colonel CARELESS, *as in Prison.*

Care. The time's almost come: how slow it flutters! My desires are better winged. How I long to counterfeit a faintness when I come to the bottom, and sink into the arms of this dear witty fair!——Ha, who's this?

Enter Soldier.

Sol. Here, sir, here's a ladder of ropes; fasten it to your window, and descend: you shall be waited for.

Care. The careful creature has sent it.—But d'ye hear, sir; could you not spare that implement by your side? it might serve to keep off small curs.

Sol. You'll have no need on't, but there it is:—make haste; the coast is clear. [*Exit.*

Care. O! this pretty she captain-general over my soul and body; the thought of her musters every faculty I have: she has sent the ropes, and stays for me: no dancer of the ropes ever slid down with that swiftness, or desire of haste, that I will make to thee. [*Exit.*

Enter BLUNT, *in his Soldier's coat.*

Blunt. All's quiet, and the coast clear; so far it goes well: that is the window: in this nook I'll stand, 'till I see him coming down. [*Steps in.*

Colonel CARELESS *above, in his Soldier's habit, lets down the ladder of ropes, and speaks.*

Care. I cannot see my north star, that I must

sail by; 'tis clouded: perhaps she stands close in some corner.—I'll not trifle time: all's clear. —Fortune, forbear thy tricks, but for this small occasion.

Enter BLUNT *and* CARELESS.

Blunt. What's this? a soldier in the place of Careless! I am betray'd; but I'll end this rascal's duty.

Care. How, a soldier!—betray'd!—this rascal sha'n't laugh at me. [*Both draw.*

Blunt. Dog.

Care. How, Blunt!

Blunt. Careless!

Care. You guess shrewdly. Plague! what contrivance hath set you and I a-tilting at one another?

Blunt. How the devil got you a soldier's habit?

Care. The same friend, for aught I know, that furnish'd you—This kind gentlewoman is Ruth still. Ha, here she is! I was just ready to be suspicious.

Enter RUTH.

Ruth. Who's there?

Care. Two notable charging red-coats.

Ruth. As I live, my heart is at my mouth.

Care. Pr'ythee, let it come to thy lips, that I may kiss it.—What have you in your lap?

Ruth. The ladder of ropes.—How, in the name of wonder, got you hither?

Care. Why, I had the ladder of ropes, and came down by it.

Blunt. Then the mistake is plainer; 'twas I that sent the soldier with the ropes.

Ruth. What an escape was this! Come, let's lose no time; here's no place to explain matters in.

Care. I will stay to tell thee I shall never deserve thee.

Ruth. Tell me so when you have had me a little while.—Come, follow me; put on your plainest garb; not like a dancing-master, with your toes out. Come along. [RUTH *pulls their hats over their eyes.*] Hang down your head, as if you wanted pay.—So. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mr DAY, *Mrs* DAY, *and Mrs* CHAT.

Mrs Day. Are you sure of this, neighbour Chat?

Mrs Chat. I'm as sure of it as I am that I have a nose to my face.

Mrs Day. Is my—

Mr Day. Ay! is my—

Mrs Day. You may give one leave, methinks, to ask out one question.—Is my daughter Ruth with her?

Mrs Chat. She was not when I saw Mrs Arbella last. I have not been so often at your honour's house, but that I know Mrs Arbella, the rich heiress, that Mr Abel was to have had, good gentleman, if he has his due. They never suspected me; for I used to buy things of my neighbour Story before she married the lieutenant; and stepping in to see Mrs Story, that now is, my neighbour Wishwell, that was, I saw, as I told you, this very Mrs Arbella; and I warrant Mrs Ruth is not far off.

Mrs Day. Let me advise then, husband.

Mr Day. Do, good duck; I'll warrant 'em—

Mrs Day. You'll warrant, when I have done the business.

Mr Day. I mean so, duck.

Mrs Day. Well! pray spare your meaning too. First, then, we'll go ourselves in person to this Story's house, and in the mean time send Abel for soldiers; and when he has brought the soldiers, let them stay at the door, and come up himself; and then, if fair means will not do, foul shall.

Mr Day. Excellent! well advised, sweet duck. Ah! let thee alone.—Be gone, Abel, and observe thy mother's directions. Remember the place.—We'll be reveng'd for robbing us, and for all their tricks.

Abel. I shall perform it.

Mrs Day. Come along, neighbour, and shew us the best way; and by and by we shall have news from Obadiah, who is gone to give the other colonel's gaoler a double charge, to keep the wild youth close. Come, husband, let's hasten. —Mrs Chat, the state shall know what good service you have done.

Mrs Chat. I thank your honour. [*Exeunt.*

Enter ARBELLA *and Lieutenant.*

Lieu. Pray, madam, weep no more! spare your tears till you know they have miscarried.

Arb. 'Tis a woman, sir, that weeps: we want men's reasons, and their courage to practise with.

Lieu. Look up, madam, and meet your unexpected joys!

Enter RUTH, *Colonel* CARELESS, *and Colonel* BLUNT.

Arb. Oh, my dear friend! my dear, dear Ruth!

Care. Pray, none of these phlegmatic hugs. There, take your colonel:—my captain and I can hug afresh every minute.

Ruth. When did we hug last, good soldier?

Care. I have done nothing but hug thee in fancy, ever since you, Ruth, turn'd Annice.

Arb. You are welcome, sir. I cannot deny I shar'd in all your danger.

Lieu. If she had deny'd it, colonel, I would have betrayed her.

Blunt. I know not what to say, nor how to tell how dearly, how well—I love you.

Arb. Now, cann't I say I love him; yet I have a mind to tell him too.

Ruth. Keep't in, and choke yourself, or get the rising of the lights.

Arb. What shall I say?

Ruth. Say something, or he'll vanish.

Blunt. D'ye not believe I love you? or cann't you love me?—Not a word.——Could you——but——

Arb. No more; I'll save you the labour of courtship, which should be too tedious to all plain and honest natures. It is enough; I know you love me.

Blunt. Or may I perish whilst I am swearing it.

Enter 'Prentice.

Lieu. How now, Jack?

'Pren. O, master, undone! Here's Mr Day the committee-man, and his fierce wife, come into the shop. Mrs Chat brought them in, and they say they will come up:—they know that Mrs Arbella and their daughter Ruth are here. Deny 'em, if you dare, they say.

Lieu. Go down, boy, and tell 'em I am coming to 'em. [*Exit 'Prentice.*] This pure jade, my neighbour Chat, has betrayed us. What shall I do? I warrant the rascal has soldiers at his heels.—I think I could help the colonels out at a back-door.

Blunt. I'd die rather by my Arbella. Now, you shall see I love you.

Care. Nor will I, Charles, forsake you, Annice.

Ruth. Come, be cheerful; I'll defend you all against the assaults of Captain Day and Major-general Day, his new drawn-up wife. Give me my ammunition,—[*To* ARBELLA] the papers, woman. So, if I do not rout 'em, fall on; let's all die together, and make no more graves but one.

Blunt. 'Slife! I love her now, for all she has jeer'd me so.

Ruth. Go fetch him in, lieutenant. [*Exit Lieutenant.*] Stand you all drawn up as my reserve—so—I for the forlorn hope.

Care. That we had Teague here, to quarrel with the female triumphing Day, whilst I threw the male Day out of the window! Hark, I hear the troop marching; I know the she Day's stamp, among the tramples of a regiment.

Arb. They come, wench; charge 'em bravely; I'll second thee with a volley.

Ruth. They'll not stand the first charge; fear not:—now the Day breaks.

Care. Would 'twere his neck were broke.

Enter Mr DAY *and Mrs* DAY.

Mrs Day. Ah ha! my fine runaways, have I found you? What, you think my husband's honour lives without intelligence. Marry, come up!

Mr Day. My duck tells you how 'tis—We—

Mrs Day. Why, then, let your duck tell 'em how 'tis.—Yet, as I was saying, you shall perceive we abound in intelligence, else 'twere not for us to go about to keep the nation quiet:—but if you, Mrs. Arbella, will deliver up what you have stolen, and submit, and return with us, and this ungracious Ruth———

Ruth. Anne, if you please.

Mrs Day. Who gave you that name, pray?

Ruth. My godfathers and godmothers:—on, forsooth; I can answer a leaf farther.

Mr Day. Duck, good duck, a word: I do not like this name Annice.

Mrs Day. You are ever in a fright, with a shrivell'd heart of your own.—Well, gentlewoman, you are merry.

Arb. As newly come out of our wardships.—I hope Mr Abel is well.

Mrs Day. Yes, he is well: you shall see him presently; yes, you shall see him.

Care. That is, with myrmidons.—Come, good Anne, no more delay; fall on.

Ruth. Then, before the furious Abel approaches, with his red-coats, who, perhaps, are now marching under the conduct of that expert captain in weighty matters, know, the articles of our treaty are only these:—this Arbella will keep her estate, and not marry Abel, but this gentleman; and I Anne, daughter to Sir Basil Thoroughgood, and not Ruth, as has been thought, have taken my own estate, together with this gentleman, for better for worse. We were modest, though thieves; only plundered our own.

Mrs Day. Yes, gentlewoman, you took something else, and that my husband can prove: it may cost you your necks, if you do not submit.

Ruth. Truth on't is, we did take something else.

Mrs Day. Oh! did you so?

Ruth. Pray give me leave to speak one word in private with my father Day.

Mr Day. Do so, do so: are you going to compound? Oh! 'tis father Day now!

Ruth. D'ye hear, sir? how long is it since you have practised physic? [*Takes him aside.*

Mr Day. Physic! what d'ye mean?

Ruth. I mean physic.—Look ye, here's a small prescription of yours. D'ye know this hand-writing?

Mr Day. I am undone.

Ruth. Here's another, upon the same subject. This young one, I believe, came into this wicked world for want of your preventing dose; it will not be taken now neither. It seems your wenches are wilful; nay, I do not wonder to see 'em have more conscience than you have.

Mr Day. Peace, good Mrs Anne! I am undone, if you betray me.

Enter ABEL; *goes to his Father.*

Abel. The soldiers are come.

Mr Day. Go and send 'em away, Abel; here's no need, no need, now.

Mrs Day. Are the soldiers come, Abel?

Abel. Yes, but my father biddeth me send them away.

Mr Day. No, not without your opinion, duck; but since they have but their own, I think, duck, if we were all friends—

Mrs Day. O! are you at your *ifs* again!—d'you think they shall make a fool of me, though they make an ass of you?—Call 'em up, Abel, if they will not submit; call up the soldiers, Abel.

Ruth. Why, your fierce honour shall know the business that makes the wise Mr Day inclinable to friendship.

Mr Day. Nay, good sweetheart, come, I pray let us be friends.

Mrs Day. How's this! What, am I not fit to be trusted now? Have you built your credit and reputation upon my counsel and labours, and am I not fit now to be trusted?

Mr Day. Nay, good sweet duck, I confess I owe all to thy wisdom. Good gentlemen, persuade my duck that we may be all friends.

Care. Hark you, good Gillian Day, be not so fierce upon the husband of thy bosom:—'twas but a small start of frailty: say it were a wench, or so!

Ruth. As I live, he has hit upon't by chance. Now we shall have sport. [*Aside.*

Mrs Day. How, a wench, a wench! out upon the hypocrite. A wench! was not I sufficient? A wench!—I'll be reveng'd; let him be ashamed, if he will.—Call the soldiers, Abel.

Care. Stay, good Abel; march not off so hastily.

Arb. Soft, gentle Abel, or I'll discover you are in bonds; you shall never be releas'd if you move a step.

Ruth. D'ye hear, Mrs Day, be not so furious; hold your peace; you may divulge your husband's shame, if you are so simple, and cast him out of authority, nay, and have him tried for his life:—read this. Remember too, I know of your bribery and cheating, and something else: you guess. Be friends, and forgive one another. Here's a letter counterfeited from the king, to bestow preferment upon Mr Day if he would turn honest; by which means, I suppose, you cozen'd your brother cheats; in which he was to remember his service to you. I believe 'twas your inditing. You are the committee-man. 'Tis your best way (nay, never demur) to kiss, and be friends. Now, if you can contrive handsomely to cozen those that cozen all the world, and get these gentlemen to come by their estates easily, and without taking the covenant, the old sum of five hundred pounds, that I used to talk of, shall be yours yet.

Mrs Day. We will endeavour.

Ruth. Come, Mrs Arbella, pray let's all be friends.

Arb. With all my heart.

Ruth. Brother Abel, the bird is flown; but you shall be released from your bonds.

Abel. I bear my afflictions as I may.

Enter TEAGUE, *leading* OBADIAH *in a Halter, and a Musician.*

Teague. What is this now? Who are you? Well, are not you Mrs Tay? Well, I will tell her what I should say now! Shall I then? I will try if I cannot laugh too, as I did, or think of the mustard-pot.

Care. No, good Teague, there's no need of thy message now:—But why dost thou lead Obadiah thus?

Teague. Well, I will hang him presently, that I will. Look you here, Mrs Tay; here's your man Obadiah, do you see? he would not let me make him drunk, so I did take him in this string, and I am going to choke him by the throat.

Blunt. Honest Teague, thy master is beholden to thee, in some measure, for his liberty.

Care. Teague, I shall requite thy honesty.

Teague. Well, shall I hang him then? It is a rogue, now, who would not be drunk for the king.

Ob. I do beseech you, gentlemen, let me not be brought unto death.

Teague. You shall be brought to the gallows, you thief o' the world.

Care. No, poor Teague, 'tis enough; we are all friends. Come, let him go.

Teague. Are you all friends? Then, here, little Obid, take the string, and go and hang yourself.

Care. D'ye hear, my friend; [*To the Musician*] are any of your companions with you?

Mus. Yes, sir.

Care. As I live, we'll all dance; it shall be the celebration of our weddings. Nay, Mr Day, as we hope to continue friends, you and your duck shall trip it too.

Teague. Ay, by my shoul will we: Obadiah shall be my woman too, and you shall dance for the king, that you shall.

Care. Go, and strike up then:—no chiding now, Mrs Day. Come, you must not be refractory for once.

Mrs Day. Well, husband, since these gentlemen will have it so, and that they may perceive we are friends, dance.

Blunt. Now, Mr Day, to your business; get it done as soon as you will, the five hundred pounds shall be ready.

Care. So, friends:—thanks, honest Teague; thou shalt flourish in a new livery for this. Now, Mrs Annice, I hope you and I may agree about kissing, and compound every way. Now, Mr Day,

If you will have good luck in every thing,
Turn cavalier, and cry, God bless the king.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

BUT now the greatest thing is left to do,
More just committee, to compound with you;
For, till your equal censures shall be known,
The poet's under sequestration;
He has no title to his small estate
Of wit, unless you please to set the rate.
Accept this half year's purchase of his wit,
For in the compass of that time 'twas writ:
Not that this is enough; he'll pay you more,
If you yourselves believe him not too poor:
For 'tis your judgments give him wealth; in this
He's just as rich as you believe he is.
Would all committees could have done like you,
Made men more rich, and by their payments too.

THE

REHEARSAL.

BY

GEORGE, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

PROLOGUE.

We might well call this short mock-play of ours,
A posie made of weeds instead of flowers;
Yet such have been presented to your noses,
And there are such, I fear, who thought 'em roses.
Would some of 'em were here, to see, this night,
What stuff it is in which they took delight.
Here brisk, insipid rogues, for wit, let fall
Sometimes dull sense, but oft'ner none at all:
There strutting heroes, with a grim-fac'd train,
Shall brave the gods, in King Cambyses vein.
For (changing rules, of late, as if men writ
In spite of reason, nature, art, and wit,)
Our poets make us laugh at tragedy,
And with their comedies they make us cry.

Now, critics, do your worst, that here are met;
For, like a rook, I have hedg'd in my bet:
If you approve, I shall assume the state
Of those high-flyers whom I imitate;
And justly too; for I will teach you more
Than ever they would let you know before:
I will not only shew the feats they do,
But give you all their reasons for 'em too.
Some honour may to me from hence arise:
But if, by my endeavours, you grow wise,
And what you once so prais'd, shall now despise,
Then I'll cry out, swell'd with poetic rage,
'Tis I, John Lacy, have reform'd your stage.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

BAYES.
JOHNSON.
SMITH.
Two Kings of BRENTFORD.
Prince PRETTYMAN.
Prince VOLSCIUS.
Gentleman-Usher.
Physician.
DRAWCANSIR.
General.
Lieutenant-General.
CORDELIO.
TOM THIMBLE.
Fisherman.
SUN.
THUNDER.

Players.
Soldiers.
Two Heralds.
Four Cardinals.
Mayors.
Judges.
Serjeants-at-arms.
} *Mutes.*

WOMEN.

AMARILLIS.
CLORIS.
PARTHENOPE.
PALLAS.
LIGHTNING.
MOON.
EARTH.
Attendance of Men and Women.

SCENE,—*Brentford.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.

JOHNSON *and* SMITH.

John. Honest Frank! I am glad to see thee with all my heart. How long hast thou been in town?

Smi. Faith, not above an hour: and, if I had not met you here, I had gone to look you out; for I long to talk with you freely, of all the strange new things we have heard in the country.

John. And, by my troth, I have long'd as much to laugh with you, at all the impertinent, dull, fantastical things, we are tir'd out with here.

Smi. Dull and fantastic! that's an excellent composition.—Pray, what are our men of business doing?

John. I ne'er enquire after 'em. Thou knowest my humour lies another way. I love to please myself as much, and to trouble others as little as I can; and therefore do naturally avoid the company of those solemn fops, who, being incapable of reason, and insensible of wit and pleasure, are always looking grave, and troubling one another, in hopes to be thought men of business.

Smi. Indeed I have ever observ'd that your grave lookers are the dullest of men.

John. Ay, and of birds and beasts too: Your gravest bird is an owl, and your gravest beast is an ass.

Smi. Well; but how dost thou pass thy time?

John. Why, as I use to do; eat, drink as well as I can, have a she-friend to be private with in the afternoon, and sometimes see a play; where there are such things, Frank! such hideous, monstrous things, that it has almost made me forswear the stage, and resolve to apply myself to the solid nonsense of your men of business, as the more ingenious pastime.

Smi. I have heard, indeed, you have had lately many new plays; and our country wits commend 'em.

John. Ay, so do some of our city wits too; but they are of the new kind of wits.

Smi. New kind! what kind is that?

John. Why, your virtuosi, your civil persons, your drolls; fellows that scorn to imitate nature, but are given altogether to elevate and surprise.

Smi. Elevate and surprise! pr'ythee make me understand the meaning of that.

John. Nay, by my troth; that's a hard matter; I don't understand that myself:—'Tis a phrase they have got among them, to express their no meaning by. I'll tell you, as near as I can, what it is. Let me see:—'tis fighting, loving, sleeping, rhyming, dying, dancing, singing, crying, and every thing, but thinking and sense.

Mr BAYES *passes over the Stage.*

Bayes. Your most obsequious and most observant very humble servant, sir.

John. Gad so! this is an author: I'll go fetch him to you.

Smi. No, pr'ythee let him alone.

John. Nay, by the Lord, I'll have him.—
[*Goes after him.*
Here he is; I have caught him.—Pray, sir, now, for my sake, will you do a favour to this friend of mine?

Bayes. Sir, it is not within my small capacity to do favours, but receive 'em, especially from a person that does wear the honourable title you are pleas'd to impose, sir, upon this—Sweet sir, your servant.

Smi. Your humble servant, sir.

John. But wilt thou do me a favour, now?

Bayes. Ay, sir: What is't?

John. Why, to tell him the meaning of thy last play.

Bayes. How, sir, the meaning? Do you mean the plot?

John. Ay, ay; any thing.

Bayes. Faith, sir, the intrigo's now quite out of my head; but I have a new one in my pocket, that I may say is a virgin; 't has never yet been blown upon. I must tell you one thing.—'Tis all new wit, and, though I say it, a better than my last; and you know well enough how that took. In fine, it shall read, and write, and act, and plot, and shew, ay, and pit, box, and gallery, 'egad, with any play in Europe. This morning is its last rehearsal, in their habits, and all that, as it is to be acted; and if you and your friend will do it but the honour to see it in its virgin attire, though, perhaps, it may blush, I shall not be asham'd to discover its nakedness unto you—I think it is in this pocket.
[*Puts his hand in his pocket.*

John. Sir, I confess I am not able to answer you in this new way; but if you please to lead, I shall be glad to follow you; and I hope my friend will do so too.

Smi. Sir, I have no business so considerable as should keep me from your company.

Bayes. Yes, here it is. No, cry you mercy! This is my book of Drama Common-places; the mother of many other plays.

John. Drama Common-places! Pray what's that?

Bayes. Why, sir, some certain helps, that we men of art have found it convenient to make use of.

Smi. How, sir, helps for wit?

Bayes. Ay, sir, that's my position. And I do here aver, that no man yet the sun e'er shone upon has parts sufficient to furnish out a stage, except it were by the help of these my rules.

John. What are those rules, I pray?

Bayes. Why, sir, my first rule is the rule of transversion, or *regula duplex*; changing verse into prose, or prose into verse, alternative, as you please.

Smi. Well; but how is this done by rule, sir?

Bayes. Why, thus, sir; nothing so easy, when understood! I take a book in my hand, either at home or elsewhere, for that's all one; if there be any wit in't, as there is no book but has some, I transverse it; that is, if it be prose, put it into verse, (but that takes up some time,) and if it be verse, put it into prose.

John. Methinks, Mr Bayes, that putting verse into prose should be call'd transprosing.

Bayes. By my troth, sir, 'tis a very good notion, and hereafter it shall be so.

Smi. Well, sir, and what d'ye do with it then?

Bayes. Make it my own. 'Tis so chang'd that no man can know it.—My next rule is the rule of record, by way of table-book. Pray observe.

John. We hear you, sir; go on.

Bayes. As thus:—I come into a coffee-house, or some other place where witty men resort; I make as if I minded nothing; (do you mark?) but as soon as any one speaks, pop I slap it down, and make that, too, my own.

John. But, Mr Bayes, are you not some time in danger of their making you restore, by force, what you have gotten thus by art?

Bayes. No, sir; the world's unmindful: they never take notice of these things.

Smi. But pray, Mr. Bayes, among all your other rules, have you no one rule for invention?

Bayes. Yes, sir, that's my third rule, that I have here in my pocket.

Smi. What rule can that be, I wonder!

Bayes. Why, sir, when I have any thing to invent, I never trouble my head about it, as other men do, but presently turn over this book, and there I have, at one view, all that Persius, Montaigne, Seneca's Tragedies, Horace, Juvenal, Claudian, Pliny, Plutarch's Lives, and the rest, have ever thought upon this subject: and so, in a trice, by leaving out a few words, or putting in others of my own, the business is done.

John. Indeed, Mr Bayes, this is as sure and compendious a way of wit as ever I heard of.

Bayes. Sirs, if you make the least scruple of the efficacy of these my rules, do but come to the play-house, and you shall judge of 'em by the effects.

Smi. We'll follow you, sir. [*Exeunt.*

Enter three Players upon the Stage.

1*st Play.* Have you your part perfect?

2*d Play.* Yes, I have it without book; but I don't understand how it is to be spoken.

3*d Play.* And mine is such a one, as I cann't guess, for my life, what humour I'm to be in; whether angry, melancholy, merry, or in love. I don't know what to make on't.

1*st Play.* Pho! the author will be here presently, and he'll tell us all. You must know, this is the new way of writing; and these hard things please forty times better than the old plain way; for, look you, sir, the grand design upon the stage is, to keep the auditors in suspense; for to guess presently at the plot and the sense, tires them before the end of the first act: now, here, every line surprises you, and brings in matter. And then, for scenes, clothes, and dances, we put 'em quite down, all that ever went before us: and those are the things, you know, that are essential to a play.

2*d Play.* Well, I am not of thy mind; but, so it gets us money, 'tis no great matter.

Enter BAYES, JOHNSON, *and* SMITH.

Bayes. Come, come in, gentlemen. Y'are very welcome. Mr —a— ha' you your part ready?

1*st Play.* Yes, sir.

Bayes. But do you understand the true humour of it?

1*st Play.* Ay, sir, pretty well.

Bayes. And Amarillis, how does she do? Does not her armour become her?

3*d Play.* O, admirably!

Bayes. I'll tell you, now, a pretty conceit. What do you think I'll make 'em call her anon, in this play?

Smi. What, I pray?

Bayes. Why, I make 'em call her Armarillis, because of her armour; ha, ha, ha!

John. That will be very well, indeed.

Bayes. Ay, it's a pretty little rogue; I knew her face would set off armour extremely; and, to tell you true, I writ that part only for her. You must know she is my mistress.

John. Then I know another thing, little Bayes, —that thou hast had her, 'egad.

Bayes. No, 'egad, not yet; but I am sure I shall; for I have talk'd bawdy to her already.

John. Hast thou, faith? Pr'ythee how was that?

Bayes. Why, sir, there is, in the French tongue, a certain criticism, which, by the variation of the masculine adjective instead of the feminine, makes a quite different signification of the word; as, for example, *ma vie* is my life; but if, before *vie* you put *mon* instead of *ma*, you make it bawdy.

John. Very true.

Bayes. Now, sir, I, having observ'd this, set a trap for her, the other day, in the tyring-room; for this said I: *Adieu, bel esperanza de ma vie;* (which, 'egad, is very pretty;) to which she answer'd, I vow, almost as prettily every jot; for said she, *Songez a ma vie, monsieur;* whereupon I presently snapp'd this upon her:—*Non, non, madam—Songez vous a mon,* by gad; and nam'd the thing directly to her.

Smi. This is one of the richest stories, Mr Bayes, that ever I heard of.

Bayes. Ay, let me alone, 'egad, when I get to 'em; I'll nick 'em, I warrant you: But I'm a little nice; for you must know, at this time, I am kept by another woman, in the city.

Smi. How kept? for what?

Bayes. Why, for a *beau garçon*: I am, i'fackins.

Smi. Nay, then we shall never have done.

Bayes. And the rogue is so fond of me, Mr Johnson, that I vow to gad, I know not what to do with myself.

John. Do with thyself! no; I wonder how thou canst make a shift to hold out at this rate.

Bayes. O, devil! I can toil like a horse; only sometimes it makes me melancholy; and then, I vow to gad, for a whole day together, I am not able to say you one good thing, if it were to save my life.

Smi. That we do verily believe, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. And that's the only thing, 'egad, which mads me in my amours; for I'll tell you, as a friend, Mr Johnson, my acquaintances, I hear, begin to give out that I am dull: now I am the furthest from it in the world, 'egad; but only, forsooth, they think I am so, because I can say nothing.

John. Pho! pox! That's ill-natur'dly done of 'em.

Bayes. Ay, gad, there's no trusting o' these rogues; but—a—Come, let's sit down.—Look you, sirs, the chief hinge of this play, upon which the whole plot moves and turns, and that causes the variety of all the several accidents, which, you know, are the things in nature that makes up the grand refinement of a play, is, that I suppose two kings of the same place, as, for example, at Brentford; for I love to write familiarly: now the people having the same relations to 'em both, the same affections, the same duty, the same obedience, and all that, are divided amongst themselves in point of devoir and interest, how to behave themselves equally between 'em, the kings differing sometimes in particular, though in the main they agree. (I know not whether I make myself well understood.)

John. I did not observe you, sir; pray say that again.

Bayes. Why, look you, sir, (nay, I beseech you, be a little curious in taking notice of this, or else you'll never understand my notion of the thing,) the people being embarrass'd by their equal ties to both, and the sovereigns concerned in a reciprocal regard, as well to their own interest as the good of the people, may make a certain kind of a—you understand me—upon which there does arise several disputes, turmoils, heartburnings, and all that—In fine, you'll apprehend it better when you see it. [*Exit, to call the players.*

Smi. I find the author will be very much obliged to the players, if they can make any sense out of this.

Enter BAYES.

Bayes. Now, gentlemen, I would fain ask your opinion of one thing. I have made a prologue and an epilogue, which may both serve for either; that is, the prologue for the epilogue, or the epilogue for the prologue; (do you mark?) nay, they may both serve, too, 'egad, for any other play as well as this.

Smi. Very well. That's indeed artificial.

Bayes. And I would fain ask your judgments, now, which of them would do best for the prologue; for you must know there is in nature but two ways of making very good prologues. The one is by civility, by insinuation, good language, and all that,—a—in a manner, steal your plaudit from the courtesy of the auditors; the other, by making use of some certain personal things, which may keep a hank upon such censuring persons as cannot otherways, 'egad, in nature, be hindered from being too free with their tongues. To which end, my first prologue is, that I come out in a long black veil, and a great huge hangman behind me, with a furred cap, and his sword drawn; and there tell 'em plainly, that if, out of good nature, they will not like my play, 'egad, I'll e'en kneel down, and he shall cut my head off. Whereupon they, all clapping,—a—

Smi. Ay, but suppose they don't.

Bayes. Suppose! sir; you may suppose what you please; I have nothing to do with your suppose, sir, nor am not at all mortified at it; not at all, sir, 'egad, not one jot, sir. Suppose, quoth-a! ——ha, ha, ha! [*Walks away.*

John. Pho! pr'ythee, Bayes, don't mind what he says, he is a fellow newly come out of the country; he knows nothing of what's the relish here of the town.

Bayes. If I writ, sir, to please the country, I should have followed the old plain way; but I write for some persons of quality, and peculiar friends of mine, that understand what flame and power in writing is: and they do me right, sir, to approve of what I do.

John. Ay, ay, they will clap, I warrant you; never fear it.

Bayes. I'm sure the design's good, that cannot be denied. And then for language, 'egad, I defy 'em all, in nature, to mend it. Besides, sir, I have printed above a hundred sheets of paper, to insinuate the plot into the boxes, and, withal, have appointed two or three dozen of my friends to be ready in the pit, who, I am sure, will clap, and so the rest, you know, must follow; and then, pray, sir, what becomes of your suppose? —ha, ha, ha!

John. Nay, if the business be so well laid, it cannot miss.

Bayes. I think so, sir, and therefore would chuse this to be the prologue; for if I could engage 'em to clap before they see the play, you know it would be so much the better; because then they were engaged; for let a man write never so well, there are, now-a-days, a sort of persons they call critics, that, 'egad, have no more wit in them than so many hobby-horses; but they'll laugh at you, sir, and find fault, and censure things, that, 'egad, I'm sure they are not able to do themselves: a sort of envious persons, that emulate the glories of persons of parts, and think to build their fame by calumniation of persons, that, e'gad, to my knowledge, of all persons in the world, are, in nature, the persons that do as much despise all that, as——a——In fine, I'll say no more of 'em.

John. Nay, you have said enough of 'em, in

all conscience, I'm sure more than they'll e'er be able to answer.

Bayes. Why, I'll tell you, sir, sincerely, and *bona fide*; were it not for the sake of some ingenious persons, and choice females pirits, that have a value for me, I would see 'em all hang'd, 'egad, see 'em all hang'd, before I would e'er set pen to paper, but let 'em live in ignorance, like ingrates.

John. Ay, marry! that were a way to be revenged of 'em indeed; and if I were in your place now, I would do so.

Bayes. No, sir; there are certain ties upon me, that I cannot be disengaged from; otherwise, I would.—But pray, sir, how do you like my hangman?

Smi. By my troth, sir, I should like him very well.

Bayes. But how do you like it, sir? (for I see you can judge:) would you have it for a prologue, or the epilogue?

John. Faith, sir, 'tis so good, let it e'en serve for both.

Bayes. No, no, that won't do. Besides, I have made another.

John. What other, sir?

Bayes. Why, sir, my other is Thunder and Lightning.

John. That's greater; I'd rather stick to that.

Bayes. Do you think so? I'll tell you, then, though there have been many witty prologues written of late, yet I think you'll say this is a *non pareillo*: I'm sure nobody has hit upon it yet; for here, sir, I make my prologue to be a dialogue; and as in my first, you see, I strive to oblige the auditors by civility, by good nature, good language, and all that; so in this, by the other way, *in terrorem*, I chuse for the persons Thunder and Lightning.—Do you apprehend the conceit?

John. Pho! pox! then you have it cock sure. They'll be hang'd before they'll dare affront an author that has 'em at that lock.

Bayes. I have made, too, one of the most delicate, dainty similies in the whole world, 'egad, if I knew how to apply it.

Smi. Let's hear it, I pray you.

Bayes. 'Tis an allusion of love.

So boar and sow, when any storm is nigh,
Snuff up, and smell it gathering in the sky;
Boar beckons sow to trot in chesnut groves,
And there consummate their unfinished loves:
Pensive in mud they wallow all alone,
And snore and gruntle to each other's moan!

How do you like it now? ha!

John. Faith, 'tis extraordinary fine, and very applicable to Thunder and Lightning, methinks, because it speaks of a storm.

Bayes. 'Egad, and so it does, now I think on't. Mr Johnson, I thank you; and I put it in *profecto*.—Come out, Thunder and Lightning.

Enter THUNDER *and* LIGHTNING.

Thun. I am the bold Thunder.

Bayes. Mr Cartwright, pr'ythee speak that a little louder, and with a hoarse voice.—I'm the bold Thunder!—Psha! speak it in a voice that thunders it out indeed.—I am the bold Thunder.

Thun. I am the bold Thunder.

Light. The brisk Lightning I.

Bayes. Nay, but you must be quick and nimble.—The brisk Lightning I.—That's my meaning.

Thun. I am the bravest Hector of the sky.

Light. And I fair Helen, that made Hector die.

Thun. I strike men down.

Light. I fire the town.

Thun. Let critics take heed how they grumble,
For then I begin for to rumble.

Light. Let the ladies allow us their graces,
Or I'll blast all the paint on their faces,
And dry up their peter to soot.

Thun. Let the critics look to't.

Light. Let the ladies look to't.

Thun. For Thunder will do't.

Light. For Lightning will shoot.

Thun. I'll give you dash for dash.

Light. I'll give you flash for flash.
Gallants I'll singe your feather.

Thun. I'll Thunder you together.

Both. Look to't, look to't; we'll do't, we'll do't; look to't; we'll do't. [*Twice or thrice repeated.* [*Exeunt ambo.*

Bayes. There's no more. 'Tis but a flash of a prologue, a droll.

Smi. Yes, 'tis short indeed, but very terrible.

Bayes. Ay, when the simile's in, it will do to a miracle, 'egad.—Come, come, begin the play.

Enter First Player.

1st Play. Sir, Mr Ivory is not come yet, but he'll be here presently; he's but two doors off.

Bayes. Come then, gentlemen, let's go out, and take a pipe of tobacco. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

BAYES, JOHNSON, *and* SMITH.

Bayes. Now, sir, because I'll do nothing here that ever was done before, instead of beginning with a scene that discovers something of the plot, I begin this play with a whisper.

Smi. Umph! very new indeed.

Bayes. Come, take your seats.—Begin, sirs.

Enter Gentleman-Usher and Physician.

Phy. Sir, by your habit, I should guess you to be the gentleman-usher of this sumptuous place.

Gent.-Ush. And, by your gait and fashion, I should almost suspect you rule the healths of both our noble kings, under the notion of physician.

Phy. You hit my function right.
Gent.-Ush. And you mine.
Phy. Then let's embrace.
Gent.-Ush. Come.
Phy. Come.
John. Pray, sir, who are those so very civil persons?
Bayes. Why, sir, the gentleman-usher and physician of the two kings of Brentford.
John. But pray, then, how comes it to pass that they know one another no better?
Bayes. Pho! that's for the better carrying on of the plot.
John. Very well.
Phy. Sir, to conclude.
Smi. What, before he begins?
Bayes. No, sir, you must know they had been a-talking of this a pretty while without.
Smi. Where? in the tyring-room?
Bayes. Why, ay, sir. He's so dull!—Come, speak again.
Phy. Sir, to conclude:—the place you fill has more than amply exacted the talents of a wary pilot; and all these threatening storms, which, like impregnate clouds, hover o'er our heads, will (when they once are grasped but by the eye of reason) melt into fruitful showers of blessings on the people.
Bayes. Pray mark that allegory. Is not that good?
John. Yes, that grasping of a storm with the eye is admirable.
Phy. But yet some rumours great are stirring; and if Lorenzo should prove false, (which none but the gods can tell,) you then, perhaps, would find that—— [*Whispers.*
Bayes. Now he whispers.
Gent.-Ush. Alone, do you say?
Phy. No, attended with the noble—[*Whispers.*
Bayes. Again.
Gent.-Ush. Who? he in gray?
Phy. Yes, and at the head of—— [*Whispers.*
Bayes. Pray mark.
Gent.-Ush. Then, sir, most certain, 'twill in time appear,
These are the reasons that have mov'd him to't:
First, he—— [*Whispers.*
Bayes. Now the other whispers.
Gent.-Ush. Secondly, they—— [*Whispers.*
Bayes. At it still.
Gent.-Ush. Thirdly, and lastly, both he and they—— [*Whispers.*
Bayes. Now they both whisper.
[*Exeunt whispering.*
Now, gentlemen, pray tell me true, and without flattery, is not this a very odd beginning of a play?
John. In troth, I think it is, sir. But why two kings of the same place?
Bayes. Why, because it's new; and that's it I aim at. I despise your Johnson and Beaumont, that borrow'd all they writ from nature; I am for fetching it purely out of my own fancy, I.
Smi. But what think you of Sir John Suckling?
Bayes. By gad, I am a better poet than he.
Smi. Well, sir, but pray why all this whispering?
Bayes. Why, sir, (besides that it is new, as I told you before,) because they are supposed to be politicians, and matters of state ought not to be divulged.
Smi. But then, sir, why——
Bayes. Sir, if you'll but respite your curiosity till the end of the fifth act, you'll find it a piece of patience not ill recompenc'd.
[*Goes to the door.*
John. How dost thou like this, Frank? Is it not just as I told thee?
Smi. Why, I did never before this see any thing in nature, and all that, (as Mr Bayes says,) so foolish, but I could give some guess at what moved the fop to do it; but this, I confess, does go beyond my reach.
John. It is all alike:—Mr Wintershall has informed me of this play already. And I'll tell thee, Frank, thou shalt not see one scene here worth one farthing, or like any thing thou canst imagine has ever been the practice of the world. And then, when he comes to what he calls good language, it is, as I told thee, very fantastical, most abominably dull, and not one word to the purpose.
Smi. It does surprise me, I'm sure, very much.
John. Ay, but it won't do so long; by that time thou hast seen a play or two, that I'll shew thee, thou wilt be pretty well acquainted with this new kind of foppery.
Smi. Pox on't, but there's no pleasure in him; he's too gross a fool to be laugh'd at.

Enter BAYES.

John. I'll swear, Mr Bayes, you have done this scene most admirably, tho', I must tell you, sir, it is a very difficult matter to pen a whisper well.
Bayes. Ay, gentlemen, when you come to write yourselves, o' my word, you'll find it so.
John. Have a care of what you say, Mr Bayes; for Mr Smith there, I assure you, has written a great many fine things already.
Bayes. Has he? i'fackins! Why, then, pray, sir, how do you do, when you write?
Smi. Faith, sir, for the most part, I am in pretty good health.
Bayes. Ay, but I mean, what do you do, when you write?
Smi. I take pen, ink, and paper, and sit down.
Bayes. Now, I write standing; that's one thing: and then another thing is, with what do you prepare yourself?
Smi. Prepare myself! what the devil does the fool mean?
Bayes. Why, I'll tell you now what I do. If I am to write familiar things, as sonnets to Armida, and the like, I make use of stew'd prunes only; but when I have a grand design in hand, I ever take physic, and let blood; for when you would have pure swiftness of thought, and fiery flights of fancy, you must have a care of the pensive part: in fine, you must purge the belly.

Smi. By my troth, sir, this is a most admirable receipt for writing.

Bayes. Ay, 'tis my secret, and, in good earnest, I think one of the best I have.

Smi. In good faith, sir, and that may very well be.

Bayes. May be, sir? 'Egad, I'm sure on't: *Experto crede Roberto.* But I must give you this caution by the way:—be sure you never take snuff when you write.

Smi. Why so, sir?

Bayes. Why, it spoil'd me once, 'egad, one of the sparkishest plays in all England.—But a friend of mine, at Gresham College, has promised to help me to some spirit of brains, and, 'egad, that shall do my business.

SCENE II.

Enter the two Kings, hand in hand.

Bayes. Oh! these are now the two kings of Brentford: take notice of their style; 'twas never yet upon the stage; but, if you like it, I could make a shift, perhaps, to shew you a whole play, writ all just so.

1st King. Did you observe their whispers, brother king?

2d King. I did, and heard, besides, a grave bird sing,
That they intend, sweetheart, to play us pranks.

Bayes. This is, now, familiar; because they are both persons of the same quality.

Smi. 'Sdeath! this would make a man speak

1st King. If that design appears,
I'll lug them by the ears,
Until I make 'em crack.

2d King. And so will I, i'fack.

1st King. You must begin, *mon foi.*

2d King. Sweet sir, *pardonnez moi.*

Bayes. Mark that: I make 'em both speak French, to shew their breeding.

John. O, 'tis extraordinary fine!

2d King. Then, spite of fate, we'll thus combined stand,
And, like true brothers, walk still hand in hand.
[*Exeunt Reges.*

John. This is a majestic scene indeed.

Bayes. Ay, 'tis a crust, a lasting crust! or your rogue critics, 'egad; I would fain see the proudest of 'em all but dare to nibble at this; 'egad, if they do, this shall rub their gums for 'em, I promise you. It was I, you must know, that have written a whole play just in this very same style: it was never acted yet.

John. How so?

Bayes. 'Egad, I can hardly tell you for laughing, ha, ha, ha! it is so pleasant a story, ha, ha, ha!

Smi. What is't?

Bayes. 'Egad, the players refused to act it, ha, ha, ha!

Smi. That's impossible.

Bayes. 'Egad, they did it, sir, point-blank refus'd it, 'egad, ha, ha, ha!

John. Fie, that was rude.

Bayes. Rude! Ay, 'egad, they are the rudest, uncivilest persons, and all that, in the whole world, 'egad; 'egad, there's no living with 'em: I have written, Mr Johnson, I do verily believe, a whole cart-load of things, every whit as good as this, and yet, I vow to gad, these insolent rascals have turn'd 'em all back upon my hands again.

John. Strange fellows indeed!

Smi. But pray, Mr Bayes, how came these two kings to know of this whisper; for, as I remember, they were not at it?

Bayes. No, but that's the actors' fault, and not mine; for the two kings should (a pox take 'em!) have popp'd both their heads in at the door, just as the other went off.

Smi. That, indeed, would ha' done it.

Bayes. Done it! ay, 'egad, these fellows are able to spoil the best things in Christendom. I'll tell you, Mr Johnson, I vow to gad, I have been so highly disobliged by the peremptoriness of these fellows, that I am resolv'd hereafter to bend my thoughts wholly for the service of the nursery, and mump your proud players, 'egad.—So, now Prince Prettyman comes in, and falls asleep, making love to his mistress, which, you know, was a grand intrigue in a late play, written by a very honest gentleman,—by a knight.

SCENE III.

Enter Prince PRETTYMAN.

Pret. How strange a captive am I grown of late!
Shall I accuse my love, or blame my fate?
My love I cannot, that is too divine,
And against Fate what mortal dares repine?

Enter CLORIS.

But here she comes.—
Sure 'tis some blazing comet! Is it not?
[*Lies down.*

Bayes. Blazing comet! mark that; 'egad, very fine!

Pret. But I am so surpris'd with sleep, I cannot speak the rest. [*Sleeps.*

Bayes. Does not that now surprise you,—to fall asleep in the nick? His spirits exhale with the heat of his passion, and all that, and swop falls asleep, as you see.—Now, here she must make a simile.

Smi. Where's the necessity of that, Mr Bayes?

Bayes. Because she's surpris'd. That's a general rule; you must ever make a simile when you are surpris'd; 'tis a new way of writing.

Clo. As some tall pine, which we on Etna find
T' have stood the rage of many a boist'rous wind,
Feeling withou that flames within do play,
Which would consume his root and sap away,
He spreads his worsted arms unto the skies,
Silently grieves, all pale, repines, and dies:
So, shrouded up, your bright eye disappears.
Break forth, bright scorching sun, and dry my tears! [*Exit.*

John. Mr Bayes, methinks this simile wants a little application too.

Bayes. No, faith, for it alludes to passion, to consuming, to dying, and all that, which, you know, are the natural effects of an amour. But I'm afraid this scene has made you sad; for, I must confess, when I writ it, I wept myself.

Smi. No, truly, sir; my spirits are almost exhal'd too, and I am likelier to fall asleep.

Prince PRETTYMAN *starts up, and says—*

It is resolv'd. [*Exit.*

Bayes. That's all.

Smi. Mr Bayes, may one be so bold as to ask you one question now, and you not be angry?

Bayes. O Lord, sir, you may ask me any thing, what you please; I vow to gad, you do me a great deal of honour; you do not know me if you say that, sir.

Smi. Then, pray, sir, what is that this prince here has resolved in his sleep?

Bayes. Why, I must confess, that question is well enough ask'd for one that is not acquainted with this new way of writing: but you must know, sir, that, to out-do all my fellow-writers, whereas they keep their *intrigo* secret till the very last scene, before the dance, I, now, sir, (do you mark?)—a—

Smi. Begin the play, and end it, without ever opening the plot at all?

Bayes. I do so; that's the very plain troth on't, ha, ha, ha! I do, 'egad. If they cannot find it out themselves, e'en let 'em alone for Bayes, I warrant you. But here, now, is a scene of business; pray observe it; for I dare say you'll think it no unwise discourse this, nor ill argued. To tell you true, 'tis a discourse I overheard once betwixt two grand, sober, governing persons.

SCENE IV.

Enter Gentleman-Usher and Physician.

Gent.-Ush. Come, sir, let's state the matter of fact, and lay our heads together.

Phy. Right, lay our heads together. I love to be merry sometimes, but when knotty points come, I lay my head close to it, with a snuff-box in my hand, and then I fegue it away, i'faith.

Bayes. I do just so, 'egad, always.

Gent.-Ush. The grand question is, whether they heard us whisper? which I divide thus.

Phy. Yes, it must be divided so, indeed.

Smi. That's very complaisant, I swear, Mr Bayes, to be of another man's opinion, before he knows what it is.

Bayes. Nay, I bring in none here but well-bred persons, I assure you.

Gent.-Ush. I divide the question into—when they heard, what they heard, and whether they heard or no.

John. Most admirably divided, I swear!

Gent.-Ush. As to the when, you say just now; so that is answered: then, as for what, why, what answers itself; for what could they hear, but what we talk'd of? So that, naturally, and of necessity, we come to the last question, viz. whether they heard or no?

Smi. This is a very wise scene, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. Ay, you have it right; they are both politicians.

Gent.-Ush. Pray then, to proceed in method, let me ask you that question.

Phy. No, you'll answer better, pray let me ask it you.

Gent.-Ush. Your will must be a law.

Phy. Come then, what is't I must ask?

Smi. This politician, I perceive, Mr Bayes, has somewhat a short memory.

Bayes. Why, sir, you must know, that t'other is the main politician, and this is but his pupil.

Gent.-Ush. You must ask me whether they heard us whisper.

Phy. Well, I do so.

Gent.-Ush. Say it then.

Smi. Hey-day! here's the bravest work that ever I saw.

John. This is mighty methodical!

Bayes. Ay, sir, that's the way, 'tis the way of art; there is no other way, 'egad, in business.

Phy. Did they hear us whisper?

Gent.-Ush. Why, truly, I cann't tell; there's much to be said upon the word whisper:—to whisper in Latin is *susurrare*, which is as much as to say, to speak softly; now, if they heard us speak softly, they heard us whisper; but then comes in the *quomodo*, the how, how did they hear us whisper? Why, as to that, there are two ways, the one by chance or accident, the other on purpose; that is, with design to hear us whisper.

Phy. Nay, if they heard us that way, I'll never give 'em physic more.

Gent.-Ush. Nor I e'er more will walk abroad before 'em.

Bayes. Pray mark this; for a great deal depends upon it, towards the latter end of the play.

Smi. I suppose that's the reason why you brought in this scene, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. Partly it was, sir; but I confess I was not unwilling, besides, to shew the world a pattern, here, how men should talk of business.

John. You have done it exceeding well indeed.

Bayes. Yes, I think this will do.

Phy. Well, if they heard us whisper, they'll turn us out, and nobody else will take us.

Smi. Not for politicians, I dare answer for it.

Phy. Let's then no more ourselves in vain bemoan:
We are not safe until we them unthrone.

Gent.-Ush. 'Tis right:
And, since occasion now seems debonair,
I'll seize on this, and you shall take that chair.

[*They draw their swords, and sit in the two great chairs upon the stage.*

Bayes. There's, now, an odd surprise; the whole state's turn'd quite topsy-turvy, without any pother or stir in the whole world, 'egad.

John. A very silent change of government, truly, as ever I heard of.

Bayes. It is so. And yet you shall see me bring 'em in again, by and by, in as odd a way every jot. [*The usurpers march out, flourishing their swords.*

Enter SHIRLY.

Shir. Hey-ho, hey-ho, what a change is here! hey-day, hey-day! I know not what to do, nor what to say. [*Exit.*

John. Mr Bayes, in my opinion, now, that gentleman might have said a little more upon this occasion.

Bayes. No, sir, not at all; for I under-writ his part on purpose to set off the rest.

John. Cry you mercy, sir!

Smi. But pray, sir, how came they to depose the kings so easily?

Bayes. Why, sir, you must know, they long had a design to do it before, but never could put it in practice till now; and, to tell you true, that's one reason I made 'em whisper so at first.

Smi. O, very well! now I'm fully satisfied.

Bayes. And then to shew you, sir, it was not done so very easily neither, in the next scene you shall see some fighting.

Smi. O ho! so then you make the struggle to be after the business is done?

Bayes. Ay.

Smi. O, I conceive you! that, I swear, is very natural.

SCENE V.

Enter Four Men at one door, and Four at another, with their swords drawn.

1st Sol. Stand. Who goes there?

2d Sol. A friend.

1st Sol. What friend?

2d Sol. A friend to the house.

1st Sol. Fall on. [*They kill one another. Music strikes.*

Bayes. Hold, hold. [*To the Music. It ceaseth.*] Now, here's an odd surprise: all these dead men you shall see rise up presently, at a certain note that I have made, in *effaut flat*, and fall a dancing.—Do you hear, dead men? remember your note in *effaut flat*.—Play on. [*To the Music.*] Now, now, now. [*The Music plays his note, and the dead men rise, but cannot get in order.*] O Lord! O Lord! Out, out, out! Did ever men spoil a good thing so! no figure, no ear, no time, nothing! Udzookers! you dance worse than the angels in Harry the Eight, or the fat spirits in the Tempest, 'egad.

1st Sol. Why, sir, 'tis impossible to do any thing in time, to this tune.

Bayes. O Lord! O Lord! impossible? Why, gentlemen, if there be any faith in a person that's a Christian, I sat up two whole nights in composing this air, and apting it for the business; for, if you observe, there are two several designs in this tune; it begins swift, and ends slow. You talk of time, and time; you shall see me do't.—Look you now. Here I am dead. [*Lies down flat on his face.*] Now, mark my note *effaut flat*.—Strike up, music. Now,—[*As he rises up hastily, he falls down again.*] Ah, gadzookers! I have broke my nose.

John. By my troth, Mr Bayes, this is a very unfortunate note of yours, in *effaut*.

Bayes. A plague of this damned stage, with your nails, and your tenter-hooks, that a gentleman cannot come to teach to act, but he must break his nose, and his face, and the devil and all.—Pray, sir, can you help me to a wet piece of brown paper?

Smi. No, indeed, sir, I don't usually carry any about me.

2d Sol. Sir, I'll go get you some within presently.

Bayes. Go, go then, I follow you.—Pray dance out the dance, and I'll be with you in a moment. Remember you dance like horsemen.

Smi. Like horsemen! what a plague can that be? [*Exit* BAYES.

[*They dance the dance, but can make nothing of it.*

1st Sol. A devil! Let's try this no longer: play my dance, that Mr Bayes found fault with so.

[*Dance and exeunt.*

Smi. What can this fool be doing all this while about his nose?

John. Pr'ythee let's go see. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

BAYES, *with a paper on his nose, and the two Gentlemen.*

Bayes. Now, sirs, this I do, because my fancy, in this play, is, to end every act with a dance.

Smi. Faith, that fancy is very good; but I should hardly have broke my nose for it, though.

John. That fancy, I suppose, is new too.

Bayes. Sir, all my fancies are so. I tread upon no man's heels; but make my flight upon my own wings, I assure you. Now, here comes in a scene of sheer wit, without any mixture in the whole world, 'egad, between Prince Prettyman and his tailor: it might properly enough be called a prize of wit; for you shall see 'em come in upon one another snip snap, hit for hit, as fast as can be. First, one speaks; then, presently, t'other's upon him, slap, with a repartee; then he at him again, dash, with a new conceit; and so eternally, eternally, 'egad, till they go quite off the stage.

[*Goes to call the players.*

Smi. What a plague does this fop mean by his snip snap, hit for hit, and dash?

John. Mean! why, he never meant any thing in's life: What dost talk of meaning for?

Enter BAYES.

Bayes. Why don't you come in?——

Enter Prince PRETTYMAN *and* TOM THIMBLE. This scene will make you die with laughing, if it

be well acted, for 'tis as full of drollery as ever it can hold: 'tis like an orange stuff'd with cloves, as for conceit.

Pret. But pr'ythee, Tom Thimble, why wilt thou needs marry? if nine tailors make but one man, and one woman cannot be satisfied with nine men: What work art thou cutting out here for thyself, trow?

Bayes. Good.

Thim. Why, an't please your highness, if I cann't make up all the work I cut out, I sha'n't want journeymen enough to help me, I warrant you.

Bayes. Good again.

Pret. I am afraid thy journeymen, though, Tom, won't work by the day, but by the night.

Bayes. Good still.

Thim. However, if my wife sits but cross-legg'd, as I do, there will be no great danger; not half so much as when I trusted you, sir, for your coronation-suit.

Bayes. Very good, i'faith.

Pret. Why, the times then lived upon trust; it was the fashion. You would not be out of time, at such a time as that, sure: a tailor, you know, must never be out of fashion.

Bayes. Right.

Thim. I'm sure, sir, I made your clothes in the court-fashion, for you never paid me yet.

Bayes. There's a bob for the court.

Pret. Why, Tom, thou art a sharp rogue when thou art angry, I see: thou pay'st me now, methinks.

Bayes. There's pay upon pay; as good as ever was written, 'egad!

Thim. Ay, sir, in your own coin: you give me nothing but words.

Bayes. Admirable, before gad!

Pret. Well, Tom, I hope shortly I shall have another coin for thee; for now the wars are coming on, I shall grow to be a man of metal.

Bayes. O! you did not do that half enough.

John. Methinks he does it admirably.

Bayes. Ay, pretty well; but he does not hit me in't; he does not top his part.

Thim. That's the way to be stamp'd yourself, sir. I shall see you come home, like an angel, for the king's evil, with a hole bored through you. [*Exeunt.*

Bayes. Ha! there he has hit it up to the hilts, 'egad! How do you like it now, gentlemen? Is not this pure wit?

Smi. 'Tis snip snap, sir, as you say; but, methinks, not pleasant, nor to the purpose, for the play does not go on.

Bayes. Play does not go on! I don't know what you mean: Why, is not this part of the play?

Smi. Yes, but the plot stands still.

Bayes. Plot stands still! Why, what a devil is the plot good for, but to bring in fine things?

Smi. O! I did not know that before.

Bayes. No, I think you did not, nor many things more, that I am master of. Now, sir, 'egad, this is the bane of all us writers; let us soar but never so little above the common pitch, 'egad, all's spoil'd; for the vulgar never understand it; they can never conceive you, sir, the excellency of these things.

John. 'Tis a sad fate, I must confess: but you write on still, for all that?

Bayes. Write on! Ay, 'egad, I warrant you. 'Tis not their talk shall stop me: if they catch me at that lock, I'll give 'em leave to hang me. As long as I know my things are good, what care I what they say?—What! are they gone, without singing my last new song? 'Sbud! would it were in their bellies. I'll tell you, Mr Johnson, if I have any skill in these matters, I vow to gad, this song is peremptorily the very best that ever yet was written: you must know, it was made by Tom Thimble's first wife after she was dead!

Smi. How, sir, after she was dead?

Bayes. Ay, sir, after she was dead. Why, what have you to say to that?

John. Say? Why, nothing: he were a devil that had any thing to say to that.

Bayes. Right.

Smi. How did she come to die, pray, sir?

Bayes. Pho! that's no matter:—by a fall: but here's the conceit, that, upon his knowing she was killed by an accident, he supposes, with a sigh, that she died for love of him.

John. Ay, ay, that's well enough: let's hear it, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. 'Tis to the tune of—Farewell, fair Armida, on seas, and in battles, in bullets, and all that.

SONG.

In swords, pikes, and bullets, 'tis safer to be,
Than in a strong castle, remoted from thee.
My death's bruise pray think you gave me, though a fall
Did give it me more, from the top of a wall;
For then if the moat on her mud would first lay,
And, after, before you my body convey,
The blue on my breast when you happen to see,
You'll say, with a sigh, there's a true blue for me.

Ha, rogues! when I am merry, I write these things as fast as hops, 'egad; for, you must know, I am as pleasant a debauchee as ever you saw; I am, i'faith.

Smi. But, Mr Bayes, how comes this song in here; for, methinks, there is no great occasion for it?

Bayes. A-lack, sir, you know nothing: you must ever interlard your plays with songs, ghosts, and dances, if you mean to——a——

John. Pit, box, and gallery, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. 'Egad, and you have nick'd it. Hark you, Mr Johnson, you know I don't flatter; 'egad, you have a great deal of wit.

John. O Lord, sir, you do me too much honour!

Bayes. Nay, nay, come, come, Mr Johnson, i'faith, this must not be said amongst us that have it. I know you have wit, by the judgment you make of this play; for that's the measure I go by: my play is my touchstone. When a man tells me such a one is a person of parts; is he so, says I? What do I do, but bring him presently to see

this play: if he likes it, I know what to think of him; if not, your most humble servant, sir; I'll no more of him, upon my word, I thank you. I am *clare voyant*, 'egad.—Now here we go on to our business.

SCENE II.

Enter the two Usurpers, hand in hand.

Gent.-Ush. But what's become of Volscius the Great?
His presence has not grac'd our court of late.

Phy. I fear some ill, from emulation sprung,
Has from us that illustrious hero wrung.

Bayes. Is not that majestical?

Smi. Yes; but who the devil is this Volscius?

Bayes. Why, that's a prince I make in love with Parthenope.

Smi. I thank you, sir.

Enter CORDELIO.

Cor. My lieges, news from Volscius the prince.

Gent.-Ush. His news is welcome, whatsoe'er it be.

Smi. How, sir; do you mean whether it be good or bad?

Bayes. Nay, pray, sir, have a little patience: gadzookers, you'll spoil all my play. Why, sir, 'tis impossible to answer every impertinent question you ask.

Smi. Cry you mercy, sir.

Cor. His highness, sirs, commanded me to tell you,
That the fair person whom you both do know,
Despairing of forgiveness for her fault,
In a deep sorrow, twice she did attempt
Upon her precious life; but by the care
Of standers-by prevented was.

Smi. 'Sheart! what stuff's here?

Cor. At last,
Volscius the Great this dire resolve embraced:
His servants he into the country sent,
And he himself to Piccadilly went,
Where he's informed, by letters, that she's dead.

Gent.-Ush. Dead! is that possible? Dead!

Phy. O, ye gods!

Bayes. There's a smart expression of a passion,—O, ye gods! That's one of my bold strokes, 'egad.

Smi. Yes.—Who is the fair person that's dead?

Bayes. That you shall know anon, sir.

Smi. Nay, if we know at all, 'tis well enough.

Bayes. Perhaps you may find too, by and by, for all this, that she's not dead neither.

Smi. Marry, that's good news indeed: I am glad of that with all my heart.

Bayes. Now here's the man brought in that is supposed to have killed her.

[*A great shout within.*

SCENE III.

Enter AMARILLIS, *with a book in her hand, and Attendants.*

Ama. What shout triumphant's that?

Enter a Soldier.

Sol. Shy maid, upon the river brink, near
Twick'n'am town, the false assassinate is ta'en.

Ama. Thanks to the powers above for this deliverance. I hope,
Its slow beginning will portend
A forward exit to all future end.

Bayes. Pish! there you are out:—To all *future* end! No, no:—To all future *end.*—You must lay the accent upon end, or else you lose the conceit.

Smi. I see you are very perfect in these matters.

Bayes. Ay, sir, I have been long enough at it, one would think, to know something.

Enter Soldiers, dragging in an old Fisherman.

Ama. Villain, what monster did corrupt thy mind,
T' attack the noblest soul of human kind?
Tell me who set thee on.

Fish. Prince Prettyman.

Ama. To kill whom?

Fish. Prince Prettyman.

Ama. What! did Prince Prettyman hire you to kill Prince Prettyman?

Fish. No: Prince Volscius.

Ama. To kill whom?

Fish. Prince Volscius.

Ama. What! did Prince Volscius hire you to kill Prince Volscius?

Fish. No: Prince Prettyman.

Ama. So:—drag him hence,
Till torture of the rack produce his sense.

[*Exeunt.*

Bayes. Mark how I make the horror of his guilt confound his intellects; for he's out at one and t'other; and that's the design of this scene.

Smi. I see, sir, you have a several design for every scene.

Bayes. Ay, that's my way of writing; and so, sir, I can dispatch you a whole play, before another man, 'egad, can make an end of his plot.

SCENE IV.

So, now enter Prince Prettyman, in a rage.—Where the devil is he? Why, Prettyman? why, when, I say? O fie, fie, fie, fie! all's marred, I vow to gad, quite marred.

Enter PRETTYMAN.

Pho! pox! you are come too late, sir; now you may go out again, if you please. I vow to gad, Mr ——a—— I would not give a button for my play, now you have done this.

Pret. What, sir?

Bayes. What, sir! 'Slife! sir, you should have come out in choler, souse upon the stage, just as the other went off. Must a man be eternally telling you of these things?

John. Sure this must be some very notable matter that he's so angry at.

Smi. I am not of your opinion.

Bayes. Pish! Come, let's hear your part, sir.

Pret. Bring in my father; why d'ye keep him from me?
Although a fisherman, he is my father.
Was ever son yet brought to this distress,
To be, for being a son, made fatherless?

Ah, you just gods, rob me not of a father;
The being of a son take from me rather.

Smi. Well, Ned, what think you now?

John. A devil! this is worst of all.—Mr Bayes, pray what's the meaning of this scene?

Bayes. O! cry you mercy, sir; I protest I had forgot to tell you. Why, sir, you must know, that, long before the beginning of this play, this prince was taken by a fisherman.

Smi. How, sir; taken prisoner?

Bayes. Taken prisoner! O Lord! what a question's there! Did ever any man ask such a question? Gadzookers! he has put the plot quite out of my head, with this damn'd question. What was I going to say?

John. Nay, the Lord knows: I cannot imagine.

Bayes. Stay, let me see:—Taken: O! 'tis true. Why, sir, as I was going to say, his highness here, the prince, was taken in a cradle by a fisherman, and brought up as his child.

Smi. Indeed!

Bayes. Nay, pr'ythee hold thy peace. And so, sir, this murder being committed by the river-side, the fisherman, upon suspicion, was seized, and thereupon the prince grew angry.

Smi. So, so: now 'tis very plain.

John. But, Mr Bayes, is not this some disparagement to a prince, to pass for a fisherman's son? Have a care of that, I pray.

Bayes. No, no; not at all; for 'tis but for a while: I shall fetch him off again presently, you shall see.

Enter PRETTYMAN *and* THIMBLE.

Pret. By all the gods, I'll set the world on fire,
Rather than let 'em ravish hence my sire.

Thim. Brave Prettyman, it is at length revealed,
That he is not thy sire who thee concealed. [*Exit.*

Bayes. Lo you now; there he's off again.

John. Admirably done, i'faith.

Bayes. Ay, now the plot thickens very much upon us.

Pret. What oracle this darkness can evince?
Sometimes a fisher's son, sometimes a prince:
It is a secret, great as is the world,
In which I, like the soul, am tossed and hurled.
The blackest ink of fate, sure, was my lot,
And when she writ my name, she made a blot.
[*Exit.*

Bayes. There's a blustering verse for you now.

Smi. Yes, sir; but why is he so mightily troubled to find he is not a fisherman's son?

Bayes. Pho! that is not because he has a mind to be his son, but for fear he should be thought to be nobody's son at all.

Smi. Nay, that would trouble a man, indeed.

Bayes. So, let me see.

SCENE V.

Enter Prince VOLSCIUS, *going out of Town.*

Smi. I thought he had been gone to Piccadilly.

Bayes. Yes, he gave it out so; but that was only to cover his design.

John. What design?

Bayes. Why, to head the army that lies concealed for him at Knightsbridge.

John. I see here's a great deal of plot, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. Yes, now it begins to break; but we shall have a world of more business anon.

Enter Prince VOLSCIUS, CLORIS, AMARILLIS, *and* HARRY, *with a riding-cloak and boots.*

Ama. Sir, you are cruel, thus to leave the town,
And to retire to country solitude.

Clo. We hoped this summer that we should at least
Have held the honour of your company.

Bayes. Held the honour of your company!—Prettily expressed.—Held the honour of your company! Gadzookers! these fellows will never take notice of any thing.

John. I assure you, sir, I admire it extremely: I don't know what he does.

Bayes. Ay, ay, he's a little envious; but 'tis no great matter.—Come.

Ama. Pray, let us two this single boon obtain,
That you will here with poor us still remain:
Before your horses come, pronounce our fate,
For then, alas! I fear, 'twill be too late.

Bayes. Sad!

Vol. Harry, my boots; for I'll go rage among
My blades encamped, and quit this urban throng.

Smi. But, pray, Mr Bayes, is not this a little difficult, that you were saying e'en now, to keep an army thus concealed in Knightsbridge?

Bayes. In Knightsbridge?—Stay.

John. No, not if inn-keepers be his friends.

Bayes. His friends! Ay, sir, his intimate acquaintance; or else, indeed, I grant it could not be.

Smi. Yes, faith, so it might be very easy.

Bayes. Nay, if I do not make all things easy, 'egad, I'll give you leave to hang me. Now you would think that he's going out of town; but you shall see how prettily I have contrived to stop him, presently.

Smi. By my troth, sir, you have so amazed me, that I know not what to think.

Enter PARTHENOPE.

Vol. Bless me! how frail are all my best resolves!
How, in a moment, is my purpose changed!
Too soon I thought myself secure from love.
Fair madam, give me leave to ask her name,
Who does so gently rob me of my fame;
For I should meet the army out of town,
And, if I fail, must hazard my renown.

Par. My mother, sir, sells ale by the town-walls,
And me her dear Parthenope she calls.

Bayes. Now that's the Parthenope I told you of.

John. Ay, ay, 'egad, you are very right.

Vol. Can vulgar vestments high-born beauty shroud?
Thou bring'st the morning pictured in a cloud.

Bayes. The morning pictured in a cloud!—Ah, gadzookers! what a conceit is there!

Par. Give you good even, sir. [*Exit.*

Vol. O, inauspicious stars! that I was born
To sudden love, and to more sudden scorn!

Ama. } How! Prince Volscius in love? Ha,
Clo. } ha, ha! [*Exeunt, laughing.*

Smi. Sure, Mr Bayes, we have lost some jest here, that they laugh at so.

Bayes. Why, did you not observe? He first resolves to go out of town, and then, as he is pulling on his boots, falls in love with her; ha, ha, ha!

Smi. Well, and where lies the jest of that?

Bayes. Ha! [*Turns to* JOHN.

John. Why, in the boots: where should the jest lie?

Bayes. 'Egad, you are in the right: it does [*Turns to* SMITH] lie in the boots—Your friend and I know where a good jest lies, though you don't, sir.

Smi. Much good do't you, sir.

Bayes. Here, now, Mr Johnson, you shall see a combat betwixt love and honour. An ancient author has made a whole play on't, but I have dispatched it all in this scene.

[VOLSCIUS *sits down to pull on his boots:* BAYES *stands by, and over-acts the part as he speaks it.*

Vol. How is my passion made a Cupid's scoff?
This hasty boot is on, the other off,
And sullen lies, with amorous design
To quit loud fame, and make that beauty mine.

Smi. Pr'ythee mark what pains Mr Bayes takes to act this speech himself.

John. Yes, the fool, I see, is mightily transported with it.

Vol. My legs, the emblem of my various thought,
Shew to what sad distraction I am brought.
Sometimes with stubborn honour, like this boot,
My mind is guarded, and resolved to do't;
Sometimes, again, that very mind, by love
Disarmed, like this other leg does prove.
Shall I to honour or to love give way?
Go on, cries honour; tender love says, nay:
Honour, aloud, commands, pluck both boots on;
But softer love does whisper, put on none.
What shall I do? what conduct shall I find
To lead me through this twilight of my mind?
For as bright day with black approach of night
Contending, makes a doubtful, puzzling light;
So does my honour and my love together
Puzzle me so, I can resolve for neither.

[*Goes out hopping, with one boot on, and the other off.*

John. By my troth, sir, this is as difficult a combat as ever I saw, and as equal; for 'tis determined on neither side.

Bayes. Ay, is't not now, 'egad? ha! For to go off hip hop, hip hop, upon this occasion, is a thousand times better than any conclusion in the world, 'egad.

John. Indeed, Mr Bayes, that hip hop, in this place, as you say, does a very great deal.

Bayes. O, all in all, sir; they are these little things that mar or set you off a play; as I remember once, in a play of mine, I set off a scene, 'egad, beyond expectation, only with a petticoat and the belly-ache.

Smi. Pray, how was that, sir?

Bayes. Why, sir, I contrived a petticoat to be brought in upon a chair, (nobody knew how,) into a prince's chamber, whose father was not to see it, that came in by chance.

John. God's my life! that was a notable contrivance indeed.

Smi. Ay, but, Mr Bayes, how could you contrive the belly-ache?

Bayes. The easiest i' the world, 'egad: I'll tell you how:—I made the prince sit down upon the petticoat, no more than so, and pretend to his father that he had just then got the belly-ache; whereupon, his father went out to call a physician, and his man run away with the petticoat.

Smi. Well, and what followed upon that?

Bayes. Nothing, no earthly thing, I vow to gad.

John. O' my word, Mr Bayes, there you hit it.

Bayes. Yes, it gave a world of content. And then I paid 'em away besides; for it made 'em all talk bawdry; ha, ha, ha! beastly, downright bawdry, upon the stage, 'egad; ha, ha, ha! but with an infinite deal of wit, that I must say.

John. That, ay, that, we know well enough, can never fail you.

Bayes. No, 'egad, cann't it.—Come, bring in the dance. [*Exit, to call the players.*

Smi. Now, the devil take thee for a silly, confident, unnatural, fulsome rogue.

Enter BAYES *and Players.*

Bayes. Pray, dance well before these gentlemen: You are commonly so lazy; but you should be light and easy; tah, tah, tah!

[*All the while they dance,* BAYES *puts 'em out with teaching 'em.*

Well, gentlemen, you'll see this dance, if I am not deceived, take very well upon the stage, when they are perfect in their motions, and all that.

Smi. I don't know how 'twill take, sir; but I am sure you sweat hard for't.

Bayes. Ay, sir, it costs me more pains and trouble to do these things than almost the things are worth.

Smi. By my troth, I think so, sir.

Bayes. Not for the things themselves; for could write you, sir, forty of 'em in a day; but, 'egad, these players are such dull persons, that, if a man be not by 'em upon every point, and at every turn, 'egad, they'll mistake you, sir, and spoil all.——

Enter a Player.

What! Is the funeral ready?

Play. Yes, sir.

Bayes. And is the lance filled with wine?

Play. Sir, 'tis just now a-doing.

Bayes. Stay, then, I'll do it myself.

Smi. Come, let's go with him.

Bayes. A match. But, Mr Johnson, 'egad, I am not like other persons; they care not what becomes of their things, so they can but get money

for 'em; now, 'egad, when I write, if it be not just as it should be in every circumstance, to every particular, 'egad, I am no more able to endure it; I am not myself; I'm out of my wits, and all that: I'm the strangest person in the whole world; for what care I for money? I write for reputation.

[Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

BAYES *and two Gentlemen.*

Bayes. Gentlemen, because I would not have any two things alike in this play, the last act beginning with a witty scene of mirth, I make this to begin with a funeral.

Smi. And is that all your reason for it, Mr Bayes?

Bayes. No, sir, I have a precedent for it besides. A person of honour, and a scholar, brought in his funeral just so; and he was one (let me tell you) that knew as well what belonged to a funeral as any man in England, 'egad.

John. Nay, if that be so, you are safe.

Bayes. 'Egad, but I have another device, a frolic, which I think yet better than all this; not for the plot or characters, (for, in my heroic plays, I make no difference as to those matters,) but for another contrivance.

Smi. What is that, I pray?

Bayes. Why, I have designed a conquest, that cannot possibly, 'egad, be acted in less than a whole week; and I'll speak a bold word,—it shall drum, trumpet, shout, and battle, 'egad, with any the most warlike tragedy we have, either ancient or modern.

John. Ay, marry, sir, there you say something.

Smi. And pray, sir, how have you ordered this same frolic of yours?

Bayes. Faith, sir, by the rule of romance. For example: They divided their things into three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or as many tomes as they please; now, I would very fain know what should hinder me from doing the same with my things, if I please.

John. Nay, if you should not be a master of your own works, 'tis very hard.

Bayes. That is my sense. And then, sir, this contrivance of mine has something of the reason of a play in it too; for as every one makes you five acts to one play, what do I, but make five plays to one plot; by which means the auditors have every day a new thing.

John. Most admirably good, i'faith! and must certainly take, because it is not tedious.

Bayes. Ay, sir, I know that; there's the main point. And then, upon Saturday, to make a close of all, (for I ever begin upon a Monday,) I make you, sir, a sixth play, that sums up the whole matter to 'em, and all that, for fear they should have forgot it.

John. That consideration, Mr Bayes, indeed, I think will be very necessary.

Smi. And when comes in your share, pray, sir?

Bayes. The third week.

John. I'll vow you'll get a world of money.

Bayes. Why, 'faith, a man must live; and if you don't thus pitch upon some new device, 'egad, you'll never do't; for this age (take it o' my word) is somewhat hard to please. But there's one pretty odd passage in the last of these plays, which may be executed two several ways, wherein I'd have your opinion, gentlemen.

John. What is't, sir?

Bayes. Why, sir, I make a male person to be in love with a female.

Smi. Do you mean that, Mr Bayes, for a new thing?

Bayes. Yes, sir, as I have ordered it. You shall hear. He having passionately loved her through my five whole plays, finding, at last, that she consents to his love, just after that his mother had appeared to him like a ghost, he kills himself. That's one way. The other is, that, she coming at last to love him with as violent a passion as he loved her, she kills herself. Now, my question is, which of these two persons should suffer upon this occasion?

John. By my troth, it is a very hard case to decide.

Bayes. The hardest in the world, 'egad, and has puzzled this pate very much. What say you, Mr Smith?

Smi. Why, truly, Mr Bayes, if it might stand with your justice, now, I would spare 'em both.

Bayes. 'Egad, and I think—ha—why, then, I'll make him hinder her from killing herself. Ay, it shall be so.—Come, come, bring in the funeral.

Enter a Funeral, with the two Usurpers and Attendants.

Lay it down there; no, no; here, sir. So:—now speak.

K. Ush. Set down the funeral pile, and let our grief
Receive, from its embraces, some relief.

K. Phy. Was't not unjust to ravish hence her breath,
And, in life's stead, to leave us nought but death?
The world discovers now its emptiness,
And, by her loss, demonstrates we have less.

Bayes. Is not this good language now? Is not that elevate? 'Tis my *non ultra*, 'egad. You must know they were both in love with her.

Smi. With her! With whom?

Bayes. Why, this is Lardella's funeral.

Smi. Lardella! Ay, who is she?

Bayes. Why, sir, the sister of Drawcansir; a lady that was drowned at sea, and had a wave for her winding-sheet.

K. Ush. Lardella! O Lardella! from above,
Behold the tragic issues of our love:
Pity us, sinking under grief and pain,
For thy being cast away upon the main.

Bayes. Look you now; you see I told you true.

Smi. Ay, sir, and I thank you for it, very kindly.

Bayes. Ay, 'egad, but you will not have patience; honest Mr—a—you will not have patience.

John. Pray, Mr Bayes, who is that Drawcansir?

Bayes. Why, sir, a fierce hero, that frights his mistress, snubs up kings, baffles armies, and does what he will, without regard to numbers, good manners, or justice.

John. A very pretty character.

Smi. But, Mr Bayes, I thought your heroes had ever been men of great humanity and justice.

Bayes. Yes, they have been so; but, for my part, I prefer that one quality of singly beating of whole armies above all your moral virtues put together, 'egad. You shall see him come in presently.—Zookers! why don't you read the paper?

[*To the Players.*

K. Phy. O! cry you mercy.

[*Goes to take the paper.*

Bayes. Pish! Nay, you are such a fumbler. Come, I'll read it myself.

[*Takes a paper from off the coffin.*

Stay, it's an ill hand; I must use my spectacles. This, now, is a copy of verses, which I make Lardella compose, just as she is dying, with design to have it pinned upon her coffin, and so read by one of the usurpers, who is her cousin.

Smi. A very shrewd design that, upon my word, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. And what do you think now, I fancy her to make love like, here, in the paper?

Smi. Like a woman: What should she make love like?

Bayes. O' my word, you are out though, sir; 'egad, you are.

Smi. What then? like a man?

Bayes. No, sir; like a humble-bee.

Smi. I confess, that I should not have fancied.

Bayes. It may be so, sir; but it is, though, in order to the opinion of some of your ancient philosophers, who held the transmigration of the soul.

Smi. Very fine.

Bayes. I'll read the title:—"*To my dear Cous. K. Phy.*'

Smi. That's a little too familiar with a king, though, sir, by your favour, for a humble-bee.

Bayes. Mr Smith, in other things I grant your knowledge may be above me; but as for poetry, give me leave to say, I understand that better; it has been longer my practice; it has, indeed, sir.

Smi. Your servant, sir.

Bayes. Pray mark it. [*Reads.*

Since death my earthly part will thus remove,
I'll come a humble-bee to your chaste love:
With silent wings I'll follow you, dear cous,
Or else before you in the sun-beams buz;
And when to melancholy groves you come,
An airy ghost, you'll know me by my hum;
For sound, being air, a ghost does well become.

Smi. [*After a pause.*] Admirable!

Bayes. At night, into your bosom I will creep,
And buz but softly if you chance to sleep;
Yet in your dreams I'll pass sweeping by,
And then both hum and buz before your eye.

John. By my troth, that's a very great promise.

Smi. Yes, and a most extraordinary comfort to boot.

Bayes. Your bed of love from dangers I will free,
But most from love of any future bee:
And when with pity your heart-strings shall crack,
With empty arms I'll bear you on my back.

Smi. A pick-a-pack! a pick-a-pack!

Bayes. Ay, 'egad; but is not that *tuant* now? ha! Is it not *tuant*?—Here's the end.
Then at your birth of immortality,
Like any winged archer, hence I'll fly,
And teach you your first fluttering in the sky.

John. O, rare! This is the most natural, refined fancy that ever I heard, I'll swear.

Bayes. Yes, I think, for a dead person, it is a good enough way of making love; for, being divested of her terrestrial part, and all that, she is only capable of these little, pretty, amorous designs, that are innocent and yet passionate—Come, draw your swords.

K. Phy. Come, sword, come sheath thyself within this breast,
Which only in Lardella's tomb can rest.

K. Ush. Come, dagger come, and penetrate this heart,
Which cannot from Lardella's love depart.

Enter PALLAS.

Pal. Hold, stop your murdering hands,
At Pallas's commands:
For the supposed dead, O kings,
Forbear to act such deadly things:—
Lardella lives; I did but try
If princes for their loves could die.
Such celestial constancy
Shall by the gods rewarded be;
And from these funeral obsequies
A nuptial banquet shall arise.

[*The coffin opens, and a banquet is discovered.*

Bayes. So:—take away the coffin.—Now it's out. This is the very funeral of the fair person which Volscius sent word was dead, and Pallas, you see, has turned it into a banquet.

Smi. Well, but where is the banquet?

Bayes. Nay, look you, sir, we must first have a dance, for joy that Lardella is not dead. Pray, sir, give me leave to bring in my things properly, at least.

Smi. That, indeed, I had forgot: I ask your pardon.

Bayes. O! d'ye so, sir? I am glad you will confess yourself once in an error, Mr Smith.

[*Dance.*

K. Ush. Resplendent Pallas, we in thee do find
The fiercest beauty, and a fiercer mind;
And since to thee Lardella's life we owe,
We'll supple statues in thy temple grow.

K. Phy. Well, since alive Lardella's found,
Let in full bowls her health go round.
[The two Usurpers take each of them a bowl in their hands.
K. Ush. But where's the wine?
Pal. That shall be mine.
Lo, from this conquering lance
Does flow the purest wine of France:
[Fills the bowls out of her lance.
And, to appease your hunger, I
Have in my helmet brought a pye:
Lastly, to bear a part with these,
Behold a buckler made of cheese.
[Vanish PALLAS.

Bayes. There's the banquet. Are you satisfied now, sir?

John. By my troth, now, that is new, and more than I expected.

Bayes. Yes, I knew this would please you; for the chief art in poetry is, to elevate your expectation, and then bring you off some extraordinary way.

Enter DRAWCANSIR.

K. Phy. What man is this, that dares disturb our feast?

Draw. He that dares drink, and for that drink dares die,
And, knowing this, dares yet drink on, am I.

John. That is, Mr Bayes, as much as to say, that though he would rather die than not drink, yet he would fain drink, for all that, too.

Bayes. Right; that's the conceit on't.

John. 'Tis a marvellous good one, I swear.

Bayes. Now, there are some critics that have advised me to put out the second *dare*, and print *must* in the place on't; but, 'egad, I think 'tis better thus, a great deal.

John. Whoo! a thousand times.

Bayes. Go on then.

K. Ush. Sir, if you please, we should be glad to know
How long you here will stay, how soon you'll go.

Bayes. Is not that, now, like a well-bred person, 'egad? So modest, so gent!

Smi. O! very like.

Draw. You shall not know how long I here will stay;
But you shall know I'll take your bowls away.
[Snatches the bowls out of the Kings' hands, and drinks them off.

Smi. But, Mr Bayes, is that, too, modest and gent?

Bayes. No, 'egad, sir, but 'tis great.

K. Ush. Though, brother, this grum stranger be a clown,
He'll leave us, sure, a little to gulp down.

Draw. Whoe'er to gulp one drop of this dares think,
I'll stare away his very power to drink.
[The two Kings sneak off the stage, with their Attendants.
I drink, I huff, I strut, look big, and stare;
And all this I can do, because I dare. *[Exit.*

Smi. I suppose, Mr Bayes, this is the fierce hero you spoke of.

Bayes. Yes; but this is nothing: you shall see him, in the last act, win above a dozen battles, one after another, 'egad, as fast's they can possibly come upon the stage.

John. That will be a sight worth the seeing, indeed.

Smi. But, pray, Mr Bayes, why do you make the kings let him use them so scurvily?

Bayes. Pho! that is to raise the character of Drawcansir.

John. O' my word, that was well thought on.

Bayes. Now, sirs, I'll shew you a scene indeed, or rather, indeed, the scene of scenes: 'tis an heroic scene.

Smi. And pray, sir, what's your design in this scene?

Bayes. Why, sir, my design is gilded truncheons, forced conceit, smooth verse, and a rant: in fine, if this scene do not take, 'egad, I'll write no more.—Come, come in Mr—a—nay, come in as many as you can.—Gentlemen, I must desire you to remove a little, for I must fill the stage.

Smi. Why fill the stage?

Bayes. O, sir, because your heroic verse never sounds well but when the stage is full.

SCENE II.

Enter Prince PRETTYMAN *and Prince* VOLSCIUS.

Nay, hold, hold; pray, by your leave a little. Look you, sir; the drift of this scene is somewhat more than ordinary; for I make them both fall out, because they are not in love with the same woman.

Smi. Not in love! you mean, I suppose, because they are in love, Mr Bayes.

Bayes. No, sir, I say, not in love: there's a new conceit for you.—Now speak.

Pret. Since Fate, Prince Volscius, now has found the way
For our so long'd-for meeting here this day,
Lend thy attention to my grand concern.

Vol. I gladly would that story from thee learn.
But thou to love dost, Prettyman, incline;
Yet love in thy breast is not love in mine.

Bayes. Antithesis! Thine and mine!

Pret. Since love itself's the same, why should it be
Differing in you from what it is in me?

Bayes. Reasoning! 'Egad, I love reasoning in verse.

Vol. Love takes, camelion like, a various dye
From every plant on which itself does lie.

Bayes. Simile!

Pret. Let not thy love the course of nature fright;
Nature does most in harmony delight.

Vol. How weak a deity would Nature prove,
Contending with the powerful god of love?

Bayes. There's a great verse!

Vol. If incense thou wilt offer at the shrine
Of mighty Love, burn it to none but mine:

Her rosy lips eternal sweets exhale,
And her bright flames make all flames else look pale.
Bayes. 'Egad, that is right.
Pret. Perhaps dull incense may thy love suffice;
But mine must be adored with sacrifice:
All hearts turn ashes which her eyes controul;
The body they consume as well as soul.
Vol. My love has yet a power more divine:
Victims her altars burn not, but refine;
Amidst the flames they ne'er give up the ghost,
But with her looks revive still as they roast:
In spite of pain and death, they're kept alive;
Her fiery eyes make 'em in fire survive.
Bayes. That is as well, 'egad, as I can do.
Vol. Let my Parthenope at length prevail.
Bayes. Civil, 'egad.
Pret. I'll sooner have a passion for a whale,
In whose vast bulk tho' store of oil doth lie,
We find more shape, more beauty in a fly.
Smi. That's uncivil, 'egad.
Bayes. Yes, but as far a fetch'd fancy, though, 'egad, as e'er you saw.
Vol. Soft, Prettyman, let not thy vain pretence,
Of perfect love, defame love's excellence:
Parthenope is, sure, as far above
All other loves, as above all is love.
Bayes. Ah! 'egad, that strikes me.
Pret. To blame my Cloris, gods would not pretend.
Bayes. Now mark.
Vol. Were all gods join'd, they could not hope to mend
My better choice: for fair Parthenope,
Gods would themselves ungod themselves, to see.
Bayes. Now the rant's a-coming.
Pret. Durst any of the gods be so uncivil,
I'd make that god subscribe himself a devil.
Bayes. Ah, gadzookers! that's well writ!
[Scratching his head, his peruke falls off.
Vol. Couldst thou that god from heaven to earth translate,
He could not fear to want a heavenly state:
Parthenope on earth can heaven create.
Pret. Cloris does heaven itself so far excel,
She can transcend the joys of heaven in hell.
Bayes. There's a bold flight for you now!—S'death! I have lost my peruke.—Well, gentlemen, this is that I never yet saw any one could write but myself. Here's true spirit and flame all through, 'egad.—So, so:—pray clear the stage.
[He puts them off the stage.
John. I wonder how the coxcomb has got the knack of writing smooth verse thus.
Smi. Why there's no need of brain for this; 'tis but scanning the labours on the finger; but where's the sense of it?
John. O! for that he desires to be excused; he is too proud a man to creep servilely after sense, I assure you.—But pray, Mr Bayes, why is this scene all in verse?
Bayes. O, sir, the subject is too great for prose.
Smi. Well said, i'faith: I'll give thee a pot of ale for that answer; 'tis well worth it.
Bayes. Come, with all my heart.——
I'll make that god subscribe himself a devil.
That single line, 'egad, is worth all that my brother poets ever writ.—Let down the curtain. *[Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

BAYES *and the two Gentlemen.*

Bayes. Now, gentlemen, I will be bold to say, I'll shew you the greatest scene that ever England saw; I mean, not for words, for those I don't value, but for state, shew, and magnificence: in fine, I'll justify it to be as grand to the eye, every whit, 'egad, as that great scene in Harry the Eight, and grander too, 'egad; for instead of two bishops, I bring in here four cardinals.

[The curtain is drawn up; the two usurping Kings appear in state, with the four Cardinals, Prince PRETTYMAN, *Prince* VOLSCIUS; AMARILLIS, CLORIS, PARTHENOPE, *&c. before them; Heralds and Serjeants-at-arms, with maces.*

Smi. Mr Bayes, pray, what is the reason that two of the cardinals are in hats, and the other in caps?
Bayes. Why, sir, because——by gad, I won't tell you.——Your country friend, sir, grows so troublesome.
K. Ush. Now, sir, to the business of the day.
K. Phy. Speak, Volscius.
Vol. Dread sovereign lords, my zeal to you must not invade my duty to your son: let me entreat that great Prince Prettyman first do speak, whose high pre-eminence, in all things that do bear the name of good, may justly claim that privilege.
Bayes. Here it begins to unfold: you may perceive now that he is his son.
John. Yes, sir, and we are very much beholden to you for that discovery.
Pret. Royal father, upon my knees I beg
That the illustrious Volscius first be heard.
Vol. That preference is only due to Amarillis, sir.
Bayes. I'll make her speak very well by and by, you shall see.
Ama. Invincible sovereigns—— *[Soft music.*
K. Ush. But stay, what sound is this invades our ears?
K. Phy. Sure, 'tis the music of the moving spheres.

Pret. Behold, with wonder, yonder comes from far
A god-like cloud, and a triumphant car,
In which our two right kings sit one by one,
With virgins' vests and laurel garlands on.

K. Ush. Then, brother Phys, 'tis time we should be gone. [*The two Usurpers steal out of the throne, and go away.*

Bayes. Look you now, did not I tell you that this would be as easy a change as the other?

Smi. Yes, faith, you did so, tho', I confess, I could not believe you; but you have brought it about I see. [*The two right Kings of Brentford descend in the clouds, singing, in white garments, and three Fiddlers sitting before them in green.*

Bayes. Now, because the two right kings descend from above, I make 'em sing to the tune and style of our modern spirits.

1st King. Haste, brother king, we are sent from above.

2d King. Let us move, let us move;
Move, to remove the fate
Of Brentford's long united state.

1st King. Tarra, tan, tarra!——full east and by south.

2d King. We sail with thunder in our mouth.
In scorching noon-day, whilst the traveller stays,
Busy, busy, busy, busy, we bustle along,
Mounted upon warm Phœbus's rays,
Through the heavenly throng,
Hasting to those
Who will feast us at night with a pig's petty toes.

1st King. And we'll fall with our plate
In an olio of hate.

2d King. But, now supper's done, the servitors try,
Like soldiers, to storm a whole half-moon pye.

1st King. They gather, they gather hot custards in spoons:
But, alas! I must leave these half-moons,
And repair to my trusty dragoons.

2d King. O! stay, for you need not as yet go astray;
The tide, like a friend, has brought ships in our way,
And on their high ropes we will play;
Like maggots in filberts, we'll snug in our shell,
We'll frisk in our shell,
We'll firk in our shell,
And farewell.

1st King. But the ladies have all inclination to dance,
And the green frogs croak out a coranto of France.

Bayes. Is not that pretty now? The fiddlers are all in green.

Smi. Ay, but they play no coranto.

John. No, but they play a tune that's a great deal better.

Bayes. No coranto, quoth-a! That's a good one, with all my heart.—Come, sing on.

2d King. Now mortals, that hear
How we tilt and career,
With wonder, will fear
The event of such things as shall never appear.

1st King. Stay you to fulfil what the gods have decreed.

2d King. Then call me to help you, if there shall be need.

1st King. So firmly resolv'd is a true Brentford king
To save the distressed, and help to 'em bring,
That, ere a full pot of good ale you can swallow,
He's here, with a whoop, and gone, with a halloo.

[BAYES *fillips his finger, and sings after them.*

Bayes. He's here, with a whoop, and gone, with a halloo.—This, sir, you must know, I thought once to have brought in with a conjuror.

John. Ay, that would have been better.

Bayes. No, faith, not when you consider it; for thus it is more compendious, and does the thing every whit as well.

Smi. Thing! what thing?

Bayes. Why, bring 'em down again into the throne, sir:—What thing would you have?

Smi. Well, but methinks the sense of this song is not very plain.

Bayes. Plain! Why, did you ever hear any people in the clouds speak plain? They must be all for flight of fancy, at its full range, without the least check or controul upon it. When once you tie up sprites and people in clouds to speak plain, you spoil all.

Smi. Bless me, what a monster's this!

[*The two Kings light out of the clouds, and step into the throne.*

1st King. Come, now to serious council we'll advance.

2d King. I do agree; but first, let's have a dance.

Bayes. Right. You did that very well, Mr Cartwright.—But first, let's have a dance! Pray remember that; be sure you do it always just so; for it must be done as if it were the effect of thought and premeditation.—But first, let's have a dance! Pray remember that.

Smi. Well, I can hold no longer; I must gag this rogue; there's no enduring of him.

John. No, pr'ythee make use of thy patience a little longer; let's see the end of him now.

[*Dance a grand dance.*

Bayes. This, now, is an ancient dance, of right belonging to the kings of Brentford, but since derived, with a little alteration, to the inns of court.

An Alarum. Enter two Heralds.

1st King. What saucy groom molests our privacies?

1st Her. The army's at the door, and, in disguise,
Desires a word with both your majesties.

2d Her. Having from Knightsbridge hither march'd by stealth.

2d King. Bid 'em attend a while, and drink our health.

Smi. How, Mr Bayes? the army in disguise!

Bayes. Ay, sir, for fear the usurpers might discover them, that went out but just now.

Smi. Why, what if they had discover'd them?

Bayes. Why, then they had broke the design.

1st King. Here, take five guineas for those warlike men.

2d King. And here's five more, that makes the sum just ten.

1st Her. We have not seen so much the Lord knows when. [*Exeunt Heralds.*

1st King. Speak on, brave Amarillis.

Ama. Invincible sovereigns, blame not my modesty,
If, at this grand conjuncture——
[*Drum beats behind the stage.*

1st King. What dreadful noise is this that comes and goes?

Enter a Soldier, with his sword drawn.

Sol. Haste hence, great sirs, your royal persons save,
For the event of war no mortal knows:
The army, wrangling for the gold you gave,
First fell to words, and then to handy-blows.
[*Exit.*

Bayes. Is not that, now, a pretty kind of a stanza, and a handsome come off?

2d King. O, dangerous estate of sovereign power!
Obnoxious to the change of every hour.

1st King. Let us for shelter in our cabinet stay;
Perhaps these threatening storms may pass away.
[*Exeunt.*

John. But, Mr Bayes, did not you promise us, just now, to make Amarillis speak very well.

Bayes. Ay, and so she would have done, but that they hinder'd her.

Smi. How, sir; whether you would or no?

Bayes. Ay, sir, the plot lay so, that, I vow to gad, it was not to be avoided.

Smi. Marry, that was hard.

John. But pray, who hinder'd her?

Bayes. Why, the battle, sir, that's just coming in at the door: and I'll tell you now a strange thing, tho' I don't pretend to do more than other men, 'egad,—I'll give you both a whole week to guess how I'll represent this battle.

Smi. I had rather be bound to fight your battle, I assure you, sir.

Bayes. Whoo! there's it now:—fight a battle! there's the common error. I knew presently where I should have you. Why, pray, sir, do but tell me this one thing:—Can you think it a decent thing, in a battle before ladies, to have men run their swords through one another, and all that?

John. No, faith, 'tis not civil.

Bayes. Right. On the other side, to have a long relation of squadrons here, and squadrons there, what is it but dull prolixity?

John. Excellently reasoned, by my troth!

Bayes. Wherefore, sir, to avoid both those indecorums, I sum up my whole battle in the representation of two persons only, no more, and yet so lively, that, I vow to gad, you would swear ten thousand men were at it, really engaged. Do you mark me?

Smi. Yes, sir; but I think I should hardly swear though, for all that.

Bayes. By my troth, sir, but you would though, when you see it; for I make 'em both come out in armour, *cap-a-pée*, with their swords drawn, and hung with a scarlet riband at their wrist; (which, you know, represents fighting enough.)

John. Ay, ay; so much, that, if I were in your place, I would make 'em go out again without ever speaking one word.

Bayes. No, there you are out; for I make each of 'em hold a lute in his hand.

Smi. How, sir? instead of a buckler?

Bayes. O Lord! O Lord! instead of a buckler! Pray, sir, do you ask no more questions. I make 'em, sir, play the battle in recitativo. And here's the conceit. Just at the very same instant that one sings, the other, sir, recovers you his sword, and puts himself in a warlike posture, so that you have at once your ear entertained with music and good language, and your eye satisfied with the garb and accoutrements of war.

Smi. I confess, sir, you stupify me.

Bayes. You shall see.

John. But, Mr Bayes, might not we have a little fighting? for I love those plays where they cut and slash one another upon the stage, for a whole hour together.

Bayes. Why, then, to tell you true, I have contrived it both ways. But you shall have my recitativo first.

John. Ay, now you are right; there is nothing, then, can be objected against it.

Bayes. True; and so, 'egad, I'll make it, too, a tragedy, in a trice.

Enter, at several doors, the General and Lieutenant-General, armed cap-a-pée, with each of them a lute in his hand, and his sword drawn, and hung with a scarlet riband at his wrist.

Lieut.-Gen. Villain, thou liest.

Gen. Arm, arm, Gonsalvo, arm. What! ho!
The lie no flesh can brook, I trow.

Lieut.-Gen. Advance from Acton with the musqueteers.

Gen. Draw down the Chelsea cuirassiers.

Lieut.-Gen. The band you boast of, Chelsea cuirassiers,
Shall, in my Putney pikes, now meet their peers.

Gen. Cheswickians, aged, and renowned in fight,
Join with the Hammersmith brigade.

Lieut.-Gen. You'll find my Mortlake boys will do them right,
Unless by Fulham numbers over-laid.

Gen. Let the left wing of Twick'n'am foot advance,
And line that eastern hedge.

Lieut.-Gen. The horse I raised in Petty France
Shall try their chance,
And scour the meadows, overgrown with sedge.

Gen. Stand: give the word.

Lieut.-Gen. Bright sword.

Gen. That may be thine,
But 'tis not mine.

Lieut.-Gen. Give fire, give fire, at once give fire, and let those recreant troops perceive mine ire.

John. Pursue, pursue: they fly,
That first did give the lie. [*Exeunt.*

Bayes. This, now, is not improper, I think; because the spectators know all these towns, and may easily conceive them to be within the dominions of the two kings of Brentford.

John. Most exceeding well designed!

Bayes. How do you think I have contrived to give a stop to this battle?

Smi. How?

Bayes. By an eclipse; which, let me tell you, is a kind of fancy that was yet never so much as thought of but by myself, and one person more, that shall be nameless.

Enter Lieutenant-General.

Lieut.-Gen. What midnight darkness does invade the day,
And snatch the victor from his conquered prey?
Is the sun weary of his bloody fight,
And winks upon us with the eye of light?
'Tis an eclipse.—This was unkind, O moon!
To clap between me and the sun so soon.
Foolish eclipse; thou this in vain hast done;
My brighter honour had eclipsed the sun:
But now behold eclipses two in one. [*Exit.*

John. This is an admirable representation of a battle, as ever I saw.

Bayes. Ay, sir. But how would you fancy to represent an eclipse?

Smi. Why, that's to be supposed.

Bayes. Supposed! Ay, you are ever at your suppose; ha, ha, ha! Why, you may as well suppose the whole play. No, it must come in upon the stage, that's certain, but in some odd way, that may delight, amuse, and all that. I have a conceit for't, that, I am sure, is new, and, I believe, to the purpose.

John. How's that?

Bayes. Why, the truth is, I took the first hint of this out of a dialogue between Phœbus and Aurora, in the Slighted Maid, which, by my troth, was very pretty; but, I think, you'll confess this is a little better.

John. No doubt on't, Mr Bayes, a great deal better.

[BAYES *hugs* JOHNSON, *then turns to* SMITH.

Bayes. Ah, dear rogue! But—a—sir, you have heard, I suppose, that your eclipse of the moon is nothing else but an interposition of the earth between the sun and moon; as, likewise, your eclipse of the sun is caused by an interlocation of the moon betwixt the earth and the sun?

Smi. I have heard some such thing indeed.

Bayes. Well, sir, then what do I, but make the earth, sun, and moon, come out upon the stage, and dance the hey: hum; and, of necessity, by the very nature of this dance, the earth must be sometimes between the sun and the moon, and the moon between the earth and sun: and there you have both your eclipses by demonstration.

John. That must needs be very fine, truly.

Bayes. Yes, it has fancy in't. And then, sir, that there may be something in't too of jake, I bring 'em all in singing, and make the moon sell the earth a bargain.—Come, come out Eclipse, to the tune of Tom Tyler.

Enter LUNA.

Luna. Orbis, O Orbis!
Come to me, thou little rogue, Orbis.

Enter the Earth.

Orb. Who calls *Terra Firma*, pray?
Luna. Luna, that ne'er shines by day.
Orb. What means Luna in a veil?
Luna. Luna means to shew her tail.
Bayes. There's the bargain.

Enter SOL, *to the tune of Robin Hood.*

Sol. Fie, sister, fie; thou mak'st me muse,
Derry, derry down,
To see thee Orb abuse.
Luna. I hope his anger 'twill not move,
Since I shewed it out of love.
Hey down, derry down.
Orb. Where shall I thy true love know,
Thou pretty, pretty moon?
Luna. To-morrow, soon, ere it be noon,
On Mount Vesuvio. [*Bis.*
Sol. Then I will shine.
[*To the tune of Trenchmore.*
Orb. And I will be fine.
Luna. And I will drink nothing but Lippary wine.
Omnes. And we, &c.
[*As they dance the hey,* BAYES *speaks.*

Bayes. Now the earth's before the moon; now the moon's before the sun: there's the eclipse again.

Smi. He's mightily taken with this, I see.

John. Ay, 'tis so extraordinary, how can he choose?

Bayes. So, now, vanish Eclipse, and enter t'other battle, and fight. Here now, if I am not mistaken, you will see fighting enough.

[*A battle is fought between foot and great hobby-horses. At last,* DRAWCANSIR *comes in, and kills them all on both sides. All this while the battle is fighting,* BAYES *is telling them when to shout, and shouts with them.*

Draw. Others may boast a single man to kill,
But I the blood of thousands daily spill.
Let petty kings the name of parties know:
Where'er I come I slay both friend and foe:
The swiftest horsemen my swift rage controuls,
And from their bodies drives their trembling souls:
If they had wings, and to the gods could fly,
I would pursue, and beat them through the sky,
And make proud Jove, with all his thunder, see
This single arm more dreadful is than he. [*Exit.*

Bayes. There's a brave fellow for you now, sirs. You may talk of your Hectors, and Achilleses, and I know not who, but I defy all your histories, and your romances too, to shew me one such conqueror as this Drawcansir.

John. I swear, I think you may.

Smi. But, Mr Bayes, how shall all these dead men go off; for I see none alive to help 'em?

Bayes. Go off! why, as they came on; upon their legs: how should they go off? Why, do you think the people here don't know they are not dead?—He is mighty ignorant, poor man. Your friend here is very silly, Mr Johnson, 'egad, he is; ha, ha, ha! Come, sir, I'll shew you how they shall go off.—Rise, rise, sirs, and go about your business.—There's go off for you now; ha, ha, ha!—Mr Ivory, a word.—Gentlemen, I'll be with you presently. [*Exit.*

John. Will you so? Then we'll be gone.

Smi. I pr'ythee let's go, that we may preserve our hearing; one battle more will take mine quite away. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BAYES *and Players.*

Bayes. Where are the gentlemen?

1*st Play.* They are gone, sir.

Bayes. Gone! 'Sdeath! this last act is best of all. I'll go fetch 'em again. [*Exit.*

1*st Play.* What shall we do, now he is gone away?

2*d Play.* Why, so much the better; then let's go to dinner.

3*d Play.* Stay, here's a foul piece of paper; let's see what 'tis.

3*d or* 4*th Play.* Ay, ay; come, let's hear it.

3*d Play.* [*Reads.*] *The argument of the fifth act.*—Cloris, at length, being sensible of Prince Prettyman's passion, consents to marry him; but, just as they are going to church, Prince Prettyman meeting, by chance, with old Joan, the chandler's widow, and remembering it was she that first brought him acquainted with Cloris, out of a high point of honour, breaks off his match with Cloris, and marries old Joan; upon which, Cloris, in despair, drowns herself, and Prince Prettyman discontentedly walks by the river-side.—This will never do: 'Tis just like the rest.—Come, let's be gone. [*Exeunt.*

Most of the Play. Ay, pox on't, let's be gone.

Enter BAYES.

Bayes. A plague on 'em both for me! they have made me sweat to run after 'em: A couple of senseless rascals, that had rather go to dinner than see this play out, with a pox to 'em! What comfort has a man to write for such dull rogues?—Come, Mr —a— Where are you, sir? Come away; quick, quick.

Enter Stage-Keeper.

S.-Keep. Sir, they are gone to dinner.

Bayes. Yes, I know the gentlemen are gone; but I ask for the players.

S.-Keep. Why an't please your worship, sir, the players are gone to dinner too.

Bayes. How! Are the players gone to dinner? 'Tis impossible! The players gone to dinner! 'Egad, if they are, I'll make 'em know what it is to injure a person that does them the honour to write for 'em, and all that. A company of proud, conceited, humourous, cross-grained persons, and all that. 'Egad, I'll make 'em the most contemptible, despicable, inconsiderable persons, and all that, in the whole world for this trick. 'Egad, I'll be revenged on 'em:—I'll sell this play to the other house.

S.-Keep. Nay, good sir, don't take away the book; you'll disappoint the company that comes to see it acted here, this afternoon.

Bayes. That's all one. I must reserve this comfort to myself: my play and I shall go together; we will not part, indeed, sir.

S.-Keep. But what will the town say, sir?

Bayes. The town! Why, what care I for the town? 'Egad, the town has used me as scurvily as the players have done: but I'll be revenged on them too; for I'll lampoon 'em all: and since they will not admit of my plays, they shall know what a satirist I am. And so, farewell to this stage, 'egad, for ever. [*Exit* BAYES.

Enter Players.

1*st Play.* Come, then, let's set up bills for another play.

2*d Play.* Ay, ay; we shall lose nothing by this, I warrant you.

1*st Play.* I am of your opinion. But, before we go, let's see Haynes and Shirley practise the last dance; for that may serve us another time.

2*d Play.* I'll call 'em in; I think they are but in the tyring-room. [*The dance done.*

1*st Play.* Come, come; let's go away to dinner. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

THE play is at an end, but where's the plot?
That circumstance the poet Bayes forgot.
And we can boast, though 'tis a plotting age,
No place is freer from it than the stage.

The ancients plotted, though, and strove to please,
With sense that might be understood with ease;
They every scene with so much wit did store,
That who brought any in, went out with more.

But this new way of wit does so surprise,
Men lose their wits in wondering where it lies.
If it be true that monstrous births presage
The following mischiefs that afflict the age,
And sad disasters to the state proclaim;
Plays without head or tail may do the same:
Wherefore, for ours, and for the kingdom's peace,
May this prodigious way of writing cease:
Let's have, at least once in our lives, a time
When we may hear some reason, not all rhyme:
We have these ten years felt its influence;
Pray let this prove a year of prose and sense.

KEY TO THE REHEARSAL.

ACT I.

Page 216, line 28, second col.

"*Bayes.* In fine, it shall read, and write, and act, and plot, and shew, ay, and pit, box, and gallery, 'egad, with any play in Europe."

The usual language of the Hon. Edward Howard, Esq., at the rehearsal of his plays.

Ibid, line 56.

"*Bayes.* These my rules."

He who writ this, not without pain and thought,
From French and English theatres has brought
Th' exactest rules by which a play is wrought,—
The unity of action, place, and time,
The scenes unbroken, and a mingled chime
Of Johnson's humour with Corneille's rhyme.

Prologue to the Maiden Queen.

Page 217, line 29, second col.

"*Bayes.* I writ that part only for her. You must know she is my mistress."

The part of Amarillis was acted by Mrs Anne Reeves, who, at that time, was kept by Mr Bayes.

Page 218, line 28, first col.

Two kings of Brentford, supposed to be the two brothers, the king and the duke.—*See page 239, line 16, second col.*

Ibid, line 58.

See the two Prologues to the Maiden Queen.

Ibid, line 39, second col.

"I have printed above a hundred sheets of paper, to insinuate the plot into the boxes."

There were printed papers given the audience, before the acting the Indian Emperor, telling them that it was the sequel of the Indian Queen, part of which play was written by Mr Bayes, &c.

Ibid, line 54.

"Persons, 'egad, I vow to gad, and all that," is the constant style of Failer, in the Wild Gallant; for which take this short speech, instead of many.

Failer. "Really, madam, I look upon you as a person of such worth, and all that, that, I vow to gad, I honour you of all persons in the world; and tho' I am a person that am inconsiderable in the world, and all that, madam, yet, for a person of your worth and excellency, I would"——

Wild Gallant, p. 8.

Page 219, line 12, first col.

"*Bayes.* No, sir, there are certain ties upon me, that I cannot be disengaged from."

He contracted with the king's company of actors, in the year 1668, for a whole share, to write them four plays a-year.

Ibid, line 47.

"So boar and sow, when any storm is nigh,
Snuff up, and smell it gathering in the sky;
Boar beckons sow to trot to chesnut groves,
And there consummate their unfinish'd loves:
Pensive in mud they wallow all alone,
And snore and grumble to each other's moan."

In ridicule of this.

So two kind turtles, when a storm is nigh,
Look up, and see it gathering in the sky;
Each calls his mate to shelter in the groves,
Leaving, in murmurs, their unfinish'd loves:
Perch'd on some dropping branch, they sit alone,
And coo, and hearken to each other's moan.

Conquest of Granada, part II. p. 48.

Ibid, line 16, second col.

"*Thun.* I am the bold Thunder.
Light. The brisk Lightning I."
I am the evening as dark as night.

Slighted Maid, p. 48.

Ibid, line 29.

Let the men 'ware the ditches;
Maids look to their breeches;
We'll scratch them with briers and thistles.

Ibid, p. 49.

Ibid, line 46.

Abraham Ivory had formerly been a considerable actor of women's parts, but afterwards stupified himself so far, with drinking strong waters, that, before the first acting this farce, he was fit for nothing but to go of errands, for which, and mere charity, the company allowed him a weekly salary.

ACT. II.

Ibid, line 56, first col.

"I begin this play with a whisper."

Drake Sen. Draw up your men,
And in low whispers give our orders out.

Play-house to be Let.

See the Amorous Prince, p. 20, 22, 39, 69, where you will find all the chief commands and directions are given in whispers.

Page 220, line 19, second col.

"Mr William Wintershall was a most excellent, judicious actor, and the best instructor of others. He died in July, 1679."

Ibid, line 53.

"*Bayes.* If I am to write familiar things, as sonnets."—*See line 53, second column of this page.*

Page 221, line 10, first col.

"Take snuff." He was a great taker of snuff, and made most of it himself.

Ibid, line 26, second col.

"Intrigue in a late play."
The Lost Lady, by Sir Robert Stapelton.

Ibid, line 51.

"As some tall pine, which we on Etna find
T' have stood the rage of many a hoist'rous wind,
Feeling without that flames within do play,
Which would consume his root and sap away,
He spreads his woorsted arms unto the skies,
Silently grieves, all pale, repines, and dies;
So, shrouded up, your bright eye disappears.
Break forth, bright scorching sun, and dry my tears."

In imitation of this passage.

As some fair tulip, by a storm oppressed,
Shrinks up, and folds its silken arms to rest,
And, bending to the blast, all pale and dead,
Hears from within the wind sing round its head;
So, shrouded up, your beauty disappears:
Unveil, my love, and lay aside your fears,—
The storm that caus'd your fright is past and gone.——*Conquest of Granada*, part I. p. 55.

Page 222, line 58, second col.

"*Bayes.* The whole state's turn'd," &c.

Such easy turns of state are frequent in our modern plays, where we see princes dethroned, and governments changed, by very feeble means, and on slight occasions; particularly in Marriage a-la-Mode, a play writ since the first publication of this farce, where (to pass by the dulness of the state part, the obscurity of the comic, the near resemblance Leonidas bears to our Prince Prettyman, being sometimes a king's son, sometimes a shepherd's, and not to question how Amalthea comes to be a princess, her brother, the king's great favourite, being but a lord) 'tis worth our while to observe how easily the fierce and jealous usurper is deposed, and the right heir placed on the throne; and it is thus related by the said imaginary princess:

Amalth. Oh! gentlemen, if you have loyalty
Or courage, shew it now: Leonidas
Broke on a sudden from his guards, and snatching
A sword from one, his back against the scaffold,
Bravely defends himself, and owns aloud
He is our long lost king, found for this moment,
But if your valours help not, lost for ever.
Two of his guards, mov'd by the sense of virtue,
Are turn'd for him; and there they stand at bay,
Against an host of foes.
Marriage a-la-Mode, p. 69.

This shews Mr Bayes to be a man of great constancy, and firm to his resolution, and not to be laughed out of his own method, agreeable to what he says in the next act:—

"As long as I know my things are good, what care I what they say."

Page 223, line 3, first col.

"Hey-day! hey-day! I know not what to do, nor what to say."
I know not what to say, or what to think!
I know not when I sleep, or when I wake!
Love and Friendship, p. 46.
My doubts and fears my reason do dismay;
I know not what to do, or what to say.
Pandora, p. 46.

ACT III.

Ibid, line 56, second col.

Prince Prettyman and Tom Thimble. Failer, and Bibber, his tailor, in the Wild Gallant, p. 5, 6.

Page 224, line 29, first col.

"*Bayes.* There's a bob for the court."

Nay, if that be all, there's no such haste: the courtiers are not so forward to pay their debts.
Wild Gallant, p. 9.

Ibid, line 35.

"*Thimb.* Ay, sir, in your own coin: you give me nothing but words."
Take a little Bibber,
And throw him in the river;
And if he will trust never,
Then there let him lie ever.
Bibber. Then, say I,
Take a little Failer,
And throw him to the gaoler,
And there let him lie
Till he has paid his tailor.
Wild Gallant, p. 12.

Ibid, line 43.

"*Bayes.* Ay, pretty well, but——he does not top his part."

A great word with Mr Edward Howard.

Ibid, line 7, second col.

"*Bayes.* As long as I know my things are good, what care I."—*See line 37, first column of this page.*

Ibid, line 33.

Song. In swords, pikes, and bullets, 'tis safer to be,
Than in a strong castle remoted from thee.
My death's bruise, pray think, you gave me, tho' a fall
Did give it me more, from the top of a wall;

For then if the moat on her mud would first lay,
And, after, before you my body convey,
The blue on my breast when you happen to see,
You'll say, with a sigh, there's a true blue for me."

In imitation of this.

On seas and in battles, through bullets and fire,
The danger is less than in hopeless desire.
My death's wound you gave me, though far off I bear
My fall from your sight, not to cost you a tear;
But if the kind flood on a wave would convey,
And under your window my body would lay,
When the wound on my breast you happen to see,
You'll say, with a sigh, it was given by me.

This is the latter part of a song, made by Mr Bayes, on the death of Captain Digby, son of George, Earl of Bristol, who was a passionate admirer of the duchess-dowager of Richmond, called by the author Armida. He lost his life in a sea-fight against the Dutch, the 28th of May, 1672.

Page 224, line 52, second col.

"*John.* Pit, box, and gallery, Mr Bayes!"

Mr Edward Howard's words.

Page 225, line 19, first col.

"*Cordel.* My lieges, news from Volscius the prince.

Gent.-Ush. His news is welcome, whatso-e'er it be."

Albert. Curtius, I've something to deliver to your ear.

Cur. Any thing from Alberto is welcome.

Amorous Prince, p. 39.

Page 226, line 27, second col.

"*Vol.* Harry, my boots; for I'll go range among
My blades encamp'd, and quit this urban throng."

Let my horses be brought ready to the door,
for I'll go out of town this evening.
Into the country I'll, with speed,
With hounds and hawks my fancy feed, &c.
Now I'll away; a country life
Shall be my mistress and my wife.

English Monsieur, p. 36, 38, 39.

Ibid, line 49.

"Fair madam, give me leave to ask her name."
And what is this maid's name? *Ibid*, p. 40.

Ibid, line 60.

"Thou bring'st the morning pictur'd in a cloud."
I bring the morning pictur'd in a cloud.

Siege of Rhodes, part I. p. 10.

Page 227, line 4, first col.

"*Ana.* How! Prince Volscius in love! ha, ha, ha!"

Mr Comely in love!—*English Monsieur*, p. 49.

Ibid, line 20.

"*Bayes.* You shall see a combat betwixt love and honour. An ancient author has writ a whole play on't."

Sir William D'Avenant's play of *Love and Honour.*

Page 227, line 42, first col.

"*Vol.* Go on, cries honour; tender love says, nay."

But honour says not so.

Siege of Rhodes, part I. p. 19.

Ibid, line 64.

"*Bayes.* I remember once, in a play of mine, I set off a scene beyond expectation, only with a petticoat and the belly-ache."

Love in a Nunnery, p. 34.

ACT IV.

Page 228, line 7, first col.

"*Bayes.* Gentlemen, because I would not have any two things alike in this play, the last act beginning with a witty scene of mirth, I begin this with a funeral."

Colonel Henry Howard, son of Thomas, Earl of Berkshire, made a play, called the "United Kingdoms," which began with a funeral, and had also two kings in it. This gave the duke a just occasion to set up two kings in Brentford, as 'tis generally believed, though others are of opinion that his grace had our two brothers in his thoughts. It was acted at the Cock-pit in Drury-Lane, soon after the restoration, but, miscarrying on the stage, the author had the modesty not to print it; and therefore the reader cannot reasonably expect any particular passages of it. Others say that they are Boabdelin and Abdalla, the two contending kings of Granada; and Mr Dryden has, in the most of his serious plays, two contending kings of the same place.

Ibid, line 27.

"I'll speak a bold word:—it shall drum, trumpet, shout, and battle, 'egad, with any the most warlike tragedy we have, either ancient or modern." *Conquest of Granada*, in two parts.

Ibid, line 55, second col.

"*Smi.* Who is she?

Bayes. The sister of Drawcansir; a lady that was drowned at sea, and had a wave to her winding-sheet."

On seas I bore her, and on seas I died;
I died, and for a winding-sheet a wave
I had, and all the ocean for my grave.

Conquest of Granada, part II. p. 113.

Page 229, line 58, first col.

"*Bayes.* Since death my earthly part will thus remove,
I'll come a humble-bee to your chaste love:
With silent wings I'll follow you, dear cous,
Or else before you in the sun-beams buz;
And when to melancholy groves you come,
An airy ghost, you'll know me by my hum;
For sound, being air, a ghost does well become.

At night, into your bosom I will creep,
And buz but softly if you chance to sleep;
Yet in your dreams I will pass sweeping by,
And then both hum and buz before your eye."

In ridicule of this.

——————My earthly part,
Which is my tyrant's right, death will remove;
I'll come all soul and spirit to your love:
With silent steps I'll follow you all day,
Or else before you in the sun-beams play:
I'll lead you hence to melancholy groves,
And there repeat the scenes of our past loves:
At night, I will within your curtains peep,
With empty arms embrace you while you sleep:
In gentle dreams I often will be by,
And sweep along before your closing eye:
All dangers from your bed I will remove,
But guard it most from any future love:
And when, at last, in pity, you will die,
I'll watch your birth of immortality,
Then, turtle-like, I'll to my mate repair,
And teach you your first flight in open air.
Tyrannic Love, p. 25.

Page 230, line 7, first col.

" *Pal.* Lo, from this conquering lance
Does flow the purest wine of France:
And, to appease your hunger, I
Have in my helmet brought a pye:
Lastly, to bear a part with these,
Behold a buckler made of cheese."

See the scene in *The Villain*, p. 47—53, where the host furnishes his guests with a collation out of his clothes, a capon from his helmet, a tansey out of the lining of his cap, cream out of his scabbard, &c.

Ibid, line 24.

" *K. Phy.* What man is this that dares disturb our feast?
Draw. He that dares drink, and for that drink dares die,
And, knowing this, dares yet drink on, am I."

In ridicule of this.

Almah. Who dares to interrupt my private walk?
Alman. He who dares love, and for that love must die,
And, knowing this, dares yet love on, am I.
Granada, part II. p. 114, 115.

Ibid, line 34.

" *Bayes.* Now, there are some critics that have advised me to put out the second *dare*, and print *must* in the place on't; but, 'egad, I think 'tis better thus, a great deal."

It was at first *dares die.*

Ibid, line 46.

" *Draw.* You shall not know how long I here will stay;
But you shall know I'll take your bowls away."

Alman. I would not now, if thou wouldst beg me, stay;
But I will take my Almahide away.
Conquest of Granada, p. 32.

Page 230, line 54, first col.

" *K. Ush.* Though, brother, this grum stranger be a clown,
He'll leave us, sure, a little to gulp down.
Draw. Whoe'er to gulp one drop of this dares think,
I'll stare away his very power to drink."

In ridicule of this.

Alman. Thou dar'st not marry her while I'm in sight:
With a bent brow thy priest and thee I'll fright;
And, in that scene which all thy hopes and wishes should content,
The thoughts of me shall make thee impotent.
Ibid, p. 5.

Ibid, line 62.

" *Draw.* I drink, I huff, I strut, look big, and stare;
And all this I can do, because I dare."
Spite of myself, I'll stay, fight, love, despair;
And all this I can do, because I dare.
Granada, part II. p. 89.

Page 231, line 2, second col.

" Gods would themselves ungod themselves, to see."

In ridicule of this.

Mux. Thou liest: there's not a god inhabits there,
But for this Christian would all heaven forswear;
Ev'n Jove would try new shapes her love to win,
And in new birds and unknown beasts would sin,
At least if Jove could love like Maximin.
Tyrannic Love, p. 17.

Ibid, line 4.

" *Pret.* Durst any of the gods be so uncivil,
I'd make that god subscribe himself a devil."
Some god, now, if he dare relate what passed,
Say but he's dead, that god shall mortal be.
Ibid, p. 7.
Provoke my rage no farther, lest I be
Revenged at once upon the gods and thee.
Ibid, p. 8.
What had the gods to do with me or mine?
Ibid, p. 57.

Ibid, line 26.

" He is too proud a man to creep servilely after sense, I assure you."
Poets, like lovers, should be bold, and dare;
They spoil their business with an over care:
And he who servilely creeps after sense,
Is safe, but ne'er can reach to excellence.
Prologue to Tyrannic Love.

ACT V.

Page 231, line 54, second col.

" *K. Ush.* But stay, what sound is this invades our ears?"
What various noises do my ears invade,
And have a concert of confusion made?
Siege of Rhodes, p. 4.

Page 232, line 20, first col.

" 1*st King.* Haste, brother king, we are sent from above.
2*d King.* Let us move, let us move;
Move, to remove the fate
Of Brentford's long united state.
1*st King.* Tarra, tan, tarra!——full east and by south.
2*d King.* We sail with thunder in our mouth.
In scorching noon-day, whilst the traveller stays,
Busy, busy, busy, busy, we bustle along,
Mounted upon warm Phœbus's rays,
Through the heavenly throng,
Hasting to those
Who will feast us at night with a pig's petty toes.
1*st King.* And we'll fall with our plate
In an olio of hate.
2*d King.* But, now supper's done, the servitors try,
Like soldiers, to storm a whole half-moon pye.
1*st King.* They gather, they gather hot custards in spoons:
But, alas! I must leave these half-moons,
And repair to my trusty dragoons.
2*d King.* O! stay, for you need not as yet go astray;
The tide, like a friend, has brought ships in our way,
And on their high ropes we will play;
Like maggots in filberts, we'll snug in our shell,
We'll frisk in our shell,
We'll firk in our shell,
And farewell.
1*st King.* But the ladies have all inclination to dance,
And the green frogs croak out a coranto of France.
2*d King.* Now mortals, that hear
How we tilt and career,
With wonder, will fear
Th' event of such things as shall never appear.
1*st King.* Stay you to fulfil what the gods have decreed.
2*d King.* Then call me to help you, if there shall be need.
1*st King.* So firmly resolved is a true Brentford king
To save the distressed, and help to 'em bring,
That, ere a full pot of good ale you can swallow,
He's here, with a whoop, and gone, with a halloo.

In ridicule of this.

Naker. Hark! my Damilcar, we are called below.
Dam. Let us go, let us go;
Go, to relieve the care
Of longing lovers in despair.
Naker. Merry, merry, merry, we sail from the east,
Half-tippled at a rain-bow feast.
Dam. In the bright moon-shine, while winds whistle loud,
Tivy, tivy, tivy!——we mount and we fly,
All racking along in a downy white cloud:
And lest our leap from the sky should prove too far,
We slide on the back of a new-falling star.
Naker. And drop from above,
In a jelly of love.
Dam. But now the sun's down, and the element's red,
The spirits of fire against us make head.
Naker. They muster, they muster, like gnats in the air.
Alas! I must leave thee, my fair,
And to my light-horsemen repair.
Dam. O! stay, for you need not to fear them to-night;
The wind is for us, and blows full in their sight,
And o'er the wide ocean we fight.
Like leaves in the autumn our foes will fall down,
And hiss in the water—
Both. And hiss in the water, and drown.
Naker. But their men lie securely entrench'd in a cloud,
And a trumpeter-hornet to battle sounds loud.
Dam. Now mortals, that spy
How we tilt in the sky,
With wonder, will gaze,
And will fear such events as will ne'er come to pass.
Naker. Stay you to perform what the man will have done.
Dam. Then call me again when the battle is won.
Both. So ready and quick is a spirit of air
To pity the lover, and succour the fair,
That, silent and swift, that little soft god
Is here with a wish, and gone with a nod.
Tyrannic Love, p. 24, 25.

Page 232, line 17, second col.

" *Bayes.* This, sir, you must know, I thought once to have brought in with a conjuror."
See *Tyrannic Love*, act 4, scene 1.

Page 233, line 16, first col.

" What dreadful noise is this that comes and goes?
Sol. Haste hence, great sirs, your royal persons save,
For the event of war no mortal knows:
The army, wrangling for the gold you gave,
First fell to words, and then to handy-blows.

In ridicule of this.

What new misfortunes do these cries presage?
1*st Mess.* Haste all you can their fury to assuage;
You are not safe from their rebellious rage.
2*d Mess.* This minute, if you grant not their desire,
They'll seize your person, and your palace fire.
Granada, part II p. 71.

Page 233, line 59, first col.

The description of the scene of generals, &c.

There needs nothing more to explain the meaning of this battle than the perusal of the first part of the Siege of Rhodes, which was performed, in recitative music, by seven persons only, and the passage out of the Play-house to be Let.

Ibid, line 34, second col.

" *Bayes.* True; and so, 'egad, I'll make it, too, a tragedy, in a trice."

Aglura and the Vestal Virgin are so contrived, by a little alteration towards the latter end of them, that they have been acted both ways, either as tragedies or comedies.

Ibid, line 41.

" Arm, arm, Gonsalvo, arm."

The Siege of Rhodes begins thus:——

Admiral. Arm, arm, Valerius, arm.

Ibid, line 45.

" *Gen.* Draw down the Chelsea cuirassiers."

The third entry thus:——

Solym. Pyrrhus, draw down our army wide,
Then, from the gross, two strong reserves divide,
And spread the wings,
As if we were to fight,
In the lost Rhodians' sight,
With all the western kings.
Each with janizaries line:
The right and left to Haly's sons assign,
The gross to Zangiban;
The main artillery
To Mustapha shall be:
Bring thou the rear; we lead the van.

Ibid, line 46.

" *Lieut.-Gen.* The band you boast of, Chelsea cuirassiers,
Shall, in my Putney pikes, now meet their peers."
More pikes! more pikes! to reinforce
That squadron, and repulse the horse.
Play-house to be Let, p. 72.

Page 234, line 1, first col.

" *Lieut.-Gen.* Give fire, give fire, at once give fire,
And let those recreant troops perceive mine ire."
Point all the cannon, and play fast;
Their fury is too hot to last:
That rampier shakes; they flee into the town.
Pyr. March up with those reserves to that redoubt.
Faint slaves, the janizaries reel!
They bend! they bend! and seem to feel
The terrors of a rout.
Must. Old Zanger halts, and reinforcement lacks.
Pyr. March on.
Must. Advance those pikes, and charge their backs.

Page 234, line 10, second col.

" *Orb.* Who calls *Terra Firmâ*, pray?
Luna. Luna, that ne'er shines by day.
Orb. What means Luna in a veil?
Luna. Luna means to shew her tail."

In ridicule of this.

Phœb. Who calls the world's great light?
Aur. Aurora, that abhors the night.
Phœb. Why does Aurora, from her cloud,
To drowsy Phœbus cry so loud?
Slighted Maid, p. 80.

Ibid, line 24.

" *Luna.* To-morrow, soon, ere it be noon,
On Mount Vesuvio, on Mount Vesuvio."
The burning Mount Vesuvio. *Ibid*, p. 81.

Ibid, line 29.

" *Luna.* And I will drink nothing but Lippary wine."
Drink, drink wine, Lippary wine. *Ibid*, p. 81.

Page 235, line 8, first col.

" Come, I'll shew you how they shall go off.—Rise, rise, sirs, and go about your business.—There's go off for you now."

Valeria, daughter to Maximin, having killed herself for the love of Porphyrius, when she was to be carried off by the bearers, strikes one of them a box on the ear, and speaks to him thus:

Hold! are you mad, you damn'd, confounded dog?
I am to rise and speak the epilogue.
Tyrannic Love.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLY,

BY

GARRICK

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.		WOMEN.
MOODY.	*Footman.*	
HARCOURT.	*Countryman.*	
SPARKISH.		*Miss* PEGGY.
BELVILLE.		ALITHEA.
		LUCY.

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—HARCOURT'S *Lodgings.*

HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE *discovered sitting.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha! and so you are in love, nephew; not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so—not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears—Ha, Dick!

Belv. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. [*Sighs.*

Har. Nay, never blush at it—when I was of your age, I was asham'd too—but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks, should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Belv. Could I have releas'd myself from that, I had, perhaps, been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain—Heigho!

Har. Ha, ha, ha! very foolish indeed.

Belv. Don't laugh at me, uncle: I am foolish, I know, but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Pr'ythee, don't talk of pity: How can I help you?——for this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Belv. No, no—I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she sha'n't, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty—with such a spirit, you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Belv. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make any thing of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I

never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Belv. My heart assures me that she is not married.

Har. O! to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon—but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship——you must know———

Belv. What, uncle? You alarm me!

Har. That I am in love too.

Belv. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Belv. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Belv. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wone r of wonders!

Belv. Well.

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Belv. What! are you in love with Peggy too? [*Rising from his chair.*

Har. Well said, jealousy.—No, no, set your heart at rest.—Your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me.—I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Belv. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr Sparkish?

Har. Cann't I be in love with a lady that is going to be married to another as well as you, sir?

Belv. But Sparkish is your friend!

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend: he can be nobody's friend, not even his own—— He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, tho' I have told him, again and again, that I was in love with her, which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome—and me really in love—He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Belv. 'Tis a conceited puppy!—And what success with the lady?

Har. No great hopes—and yet, if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair:——her honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival—she cann't like Sparkish; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be asham'd of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice, to save me.

Belv. Nothing can save *me.*

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already.

Belv. How cruel you are—you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she sha'n't be married.—— [*Knocking at the door.*] This is Sparkish, I suppose: don't drop the least hint of your passion to him; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Belv. I'll be careful.

Enter Servant.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, sir; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly; *and so will I too,* said he, very short and surlily! and away he went, mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will—I'll see him when he comes. [*Exit Servant.*] Moody call to see me! —He has something more in his head than making me a visit—'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Belv. How can he know me?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him.—Tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy, what's her name?

Belv. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, Sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire, and left, very young, under the guardianship of my old acquaintance and companion, Jack Moody.

Belv. Your companion! he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew:—he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it; I knew him well, for near two years; but, all of a sudden, he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Belv. There he gain'd such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, Sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter, who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—there's the devil, uncle!

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love, that you would take her with half her value? ha, nephew?

Belv. I'll take her with any thing—with nothing.

Har. What! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature: he has scarce taught her to write; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky, turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Belv. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity—had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light.

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest; ha, ha, ha! —*Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious*——ha, ha, ha! How often have you seen this fair Capulet?

Belv. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice; I have leapt an orchard

wall, like Romeo, to come at her; play'd the balcony-scene, from an old summer-house in the garden; and, if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb-scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick!—this spirit must produce something—but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her?

Belv. Never in the country;—he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fasten'd up the window-shutters.

[SPARKISH, *without.*

Spark. Very well, Will, I'll go up to 'em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up——take care of what I told you—not a word of Peggy;——hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Belv. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing——I have such news for thee—ha, ha, ha!—What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so—you have been giving him a lecture upon economy, I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it.—I never mind my own affairs, not I—The gods take care of Cato——I hear, Mr Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back-door that goes out into it:—very convenient and well imagined:—no young, handsome fellow should be without one—you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray'd women of quality.

Har. As you used to do——you vain fellow you:——Pr'ythee don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks——he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so;——but his modesty has done some mischief at our house——My surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Belv. You mistake the person, Mr Sparkish ——I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish; you must mistake—Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and enquired of the waiter, who dined in the back-room, No. 4, and they told him it was Mr Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you; such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both: Win her and wear her, if you can ——*Dolus an virtus* in love as well as in war—though you must be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after. Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend to me to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. [*Aside.*] Why, faith, I have, Sparkish: My brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands. I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love!

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us—but Ned shall be the man:—Poor Alithea grows impatient——I cann't put off the evil day any longer——I fancy the brute her brother has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Belv. How, country idiot, sir!

Har. Taisez vous, bête. [*Aside to* BELV.] I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Belv. No, no, he's not married.

Har. Hold your tongue. [*Elbowing* BELVILLE.

Spark. Not he—I have the finest story to tell you—By the by, he intends calling upon you, for he ask'd me where you liv'd, to complain of *modesty* there,—He pick'd up an old raking acquaintance of his, as we came along together—Will Frankly, who saw him, with his girl, sculking and muffled up, at the play, last night:—he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to shew himself; swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. Do you? cry'd Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes, thus—*You must have more wit than you used to have.—Besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week.* Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve; so I left 'em, rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Belv. I thought you said, just now, that he was *not* married: is not that a contradiction, sir? [HARCOURT *still makes signs to* BELVILLE.

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one—but, considering your modesty, and your ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks; ha, Harcourt? ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy; tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune, let me tell you) as he coops up and fattens his chickens, for his own eating: he is plaguy jealous of her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do, on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman?—he persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or other, that they are, to all intents, married in heaven, but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church-service, to complete their union—so he has made her call him husband,

and Bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, 'egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do.

Belv. Thank you, sir.——What heavenly news, uncle! [*Aside.*

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew!—And so, then, you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he cann't be married this week; he damns the lawyers for keeping him in town:——besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me, for not being jealous. [*Knocking at the door.*] There he is—I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect something; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife, that is to be; and, perhaps, we shall shew young modesty, here, a sight of Peggy too.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange, odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shewn him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody! Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman, indeed: we'll step into the next room 'till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself—much good may do you. [SPARKISH, *going, returns.*]—Remember that he is married, or he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[*Exeunt* SPARKISH *and* BELVILLE.

Har. Shew him up, Will. [*Exit Serv.*] Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange, tho' a very natural metamorphosis—a once high-spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical, country sloven!

Enter MOODY.

Moody. Mr Harcourt, your humble servant—have you forgot me?

Har. What, my old friend, Jack Moody! By thy long absence from the town, the grumpess of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy:—you are certainly married.

Moody. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress; and I have a suit at law that brings me up town, and puts me out of humour—besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow, to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you—being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moody. I have, and to oblige her—Nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now a-days, and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and cann't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moody. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences?—I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well:—fie, fie, Jack.

Moody. I'll tell you my security—I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all one—that grave circumspection, in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moody. I wish the devil had both him and his simile. [*Aside.*

Har. Well, never grumble about it; what's done cann't be undone:—Is your wife handsome and young?

Moody. She has little beauty but her youth; nothing to brag of but her health; and no attraction but her modesty—wholesome, homely, and housewifely—that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack—why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught something?

Moody. Which something I might repent as long as I live——

Har. But, pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly? She must be rich, then.

Moody. As rich as if she had the wealth of the Mogul—she'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of—then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and, being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and, since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty, and one of forty.

Har. Fifty, to my knowledge—[MOODY *turns off, and grumbles.*]—But see how you and I differ, Jack:—wit, to me, is more necessary than beauty: I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moody. 'Tis my maxim—he's a fool that marries, but he's a greater that does not marry a fool.—I know the town, Mr Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you, or your nephew.

Har. My nephew!—poor sheepish lad—he runs away from every woman he sees—he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her—he always toasts her—and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house—and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moody. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble. You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose:—not at her, unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious! Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moody. Sparkish is a fool, and may be,—what I'll take care not to be. I confess my visit to you, Mr Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not to send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel—so, pray, tell your nephew. [*Going.*

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour.—Well, I'll tell him; ha, ha, ha!—poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer.—Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew, to chide him for his gallantry? Ha, ha, ha!—we shall have fine sport.

Moody. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr Harcourt: I was once a modest, meek, young gentleman myself, and I never have been half so mischievous, before or since, as I was in that state of innocence. And so, old friend, make no ceremony with me—I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty——and so your servant. [*Exit.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha! poor Jack! what a life of suspicion does he lead! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought, and will suffer, for his folly.——Folly!—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege! When persons of a certain age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expence of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in* MOODY'S *House.*

Enter Miss PEGGY *and* ALITHEA.

Peg. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in, in London?

Ali. A pretty question! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Ranelagh, and St James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peg. Pray, sister, tell me why my Bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up close, and will not let me go a-walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday?

Ali. O! he's jealous, sister.

Peg. Jealous! what's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peg. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to a play?

Peg. Ah; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there——but I would have ventured, for all that.

Ali. But how did you like the play?

Peg. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugeously the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peg. Ay, how should I help it, sister! Pray, sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a-walking?

Ali. A-walking; ha, ha, ha! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post, and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. [*Aside.*] But here comes my brother; I'll ask him, though I am sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY.

Peg. O, my dear, dear Bud, welcome home! Why dost thou look so fropish? Who has anger'd thee?

Moody. You're a fool. [PEGGY *goes aside, and cries.*

Ali. Faith, and so she is, for crying for no fault, poor, tender creature!

Moody. What, you would have her as impudent as yourself, as arrant a gilflirt, a gadder, a magpie, and, to say all, a mere notorious town-woman!

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurer; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife, that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town.

Moody. Hark you, mistress, do not talk so before my wife:—The innocent liberty of the town!

Ali. Pray, what ill people frequent my lodgings? I keep no company with any women of scandalous reputation.

Moody. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil, answer 'em at public places, walk with 'em when they join me in the Park, Ranelagh, or Vauxhall?

Moody. Hold, hold; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found: I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance, as I do.

Peg. Indeed, be not angry with her, Bud; she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a-day.

Moody. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find?

Peg. Not I, indeed, dear: I hate London: our play-house in the country is worth a thousand of't;—would I were there again!

Moody. So you shall, I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? You are her encourager in such discourses.

Peg. No, indeed, dear; she chid me just now for liking the players-men.

Moody. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to

me her liking them, there is no hurt in't. [*Aside.*] Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I do: the player-men are finer folks.

Moody. But you love none better than me?

Peg. You are my own dear Bud, and I know you; I hate strangers.

Moody. Ay, my dear, you must love me only, and not be like the naughty town-women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddles, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peg. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place, dear.

Moody. How! if you love me, you must hate London.

Peg. But, Bud, do the town-women love the player-men too?

Moody. Ay, I warrant you.

Peg. Ay, I warrant you.

Moody. Why, you do not, I hope?

Peg. No, no, Bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moody. Ha! Mrs Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peg. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me, as 'twere, desire it.

Ali. So 'twill be in other things, I warrant. [*Aside.*

Peg. Pray let me go to a play, dear?

Moody. Hold your peace;—I won't.

Peg. Why, love?

Moody. Why, I'll tell you.

Ali. Nay, if he tell her, she'll give him more cause to forbid her that place. [*Aside.*

Peg. Pray, why, dear?

Moody. First, you like the actors, and the gallants may like you.

Peg. What! a homely country girl? No, Bud, nobody will like me.

Moody. I tell you, yes, they may.

Peg. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you: I will go.

Moody. I tell you, then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peg. Indeed! who, who, pray, who was't?

Moody. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is! [*Aside.*

Peg. Was it any Hampshire gallant, any of our neighbours?——Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moody. I promise you, you lie; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peg. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me? answer me to that. Methinks he should not: I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha!

Moody. 'Tis very well; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company: get you in, get you in.

Peg. But pray, husband, is he a pretty gentleman that loves me?

Moody. In, baggage, in.

[*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door.*

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, *and* BELVILLE.

Moody. What! all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging, by this easy coxcomb! 'Sdeath! I'll not suffer it.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice? Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits.

Moody. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you.

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow, and one you must make welcome, for he's modest. [BELVILLE *salutes* ALITHEA.] Harcourt makes himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish.

Moody. And so he is indeed—the fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills.

Har. This, Mr Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me: I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora, to restore you to your rest.

Belv. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness; it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moody. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that—My wife, sir, must not be smirked and nodded at from tavern windows:—I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Belv. Was it your wife, sir?

Moody. What's that to you, sir—suppose it was my grandmother?

Belv. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[*Exeunt* MOODY *and* BELVILLE.

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever—My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. For shame, Mr Sparkish.

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? thou hast star'd upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers, and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now: you may believe him: I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, true-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging, that——

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes——He does admire you, madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times—Have you not, Harcourt?

You do admire her; by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it,—her whole sex; and, till now, I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry: but you have the best excuse to marry I ever knew.

Ali. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never an enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now?—because it robs you of your friend here? for you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis, indeed, because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning: I do confess, heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by Heavens, I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank!—no, 'egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face. [*Aside.*

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shalt enjoy me sometimes, dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage as much as for one dead in earnest.—I think that was prettily said of me; ha, Harcourt?——But come, Frank, be not melancholy for me.

Har. No, I assure you, I am not melancholy for you.

Spark. Pr'ythee, Frank, dost think my wife, that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How, as I am? how?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but, by the world, she has wit too, as well as beauty: go, go with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; talk to her any thing; she's bashful before me.

[HARCOURT *courts* ALITHEA *aside.*

Enter MOODY.

Moody. How, sir, if you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister.—Be a pander to your own wife; bring men to her; let 'em make love before your face; thrust them into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool: ha, ha, ha!—I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em:—I'll vex thee, by the world. What have you done with Belville? [*Struggles with* MOODY, *to keep him from* HARCOURT *and* ALITHEA.

Moody. Shewn him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, pr'ythee—let me reason with thee. [*Talks aside with* MOODY.

Ali. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made; 'tis too late, sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it: he wants, you see, jealousy, the only infallible sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem:—he cannot distrust my virtue: besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you, is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head: but, in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him! my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No; if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation suffers in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, sir.—Mr Sparkish, pray come hither; your friend here is very troublesome, and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold. [*Aside to* ALITHEA.

Moody. D'ye hear that, senseless puppy?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin?

Moody. No, rather be dishonour'd, like a credulous driveller.

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him! no man can do't; he's beneath an injury; a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot, a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that———

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him; for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him; nay, I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend—Mr Sparkish, Mr Sparkish!

Spark. What, what.—Now, dear rogue, has not she wit?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. [*Surlily.*

Ali. Mr Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you?

Har. Madam!

Spark. How! no; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant,—what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you, I had no patience to hear him.

Moody. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me.

Moody. I'll give thee a better thing; I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe—when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peg. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home, last night, the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peg. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam—When you were with your lawyers last night, Miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moody. Thank you, thank you, Lucy; 'tis the luckiest thought! Go, this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again—and you shall walk with me into the Park, as my godson. —Well thought of, Lucy—I shall love you for ever for this.

Peg. And soshall I too, Lucy.—I'll put 'em on directly. [*Going, returns.*] Suppose, Bud, I must keep on my petticoats, for fear of shewing my legs?

Moody. No, no, you fool, never mind your legs.

Peg. No more I will then, Bud——This is pure. [*Exit, rejoiced.*

Moody. What a simpleton it is! Well, Lucy, I thank you for the thought, and before I leave London, thou shalt be convinced how much I am obliged to thee. [*Exit, smiling.*

Lucy. And before you leave London, Mr Moody, I hope I shall convince you how much you are obliged to me. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter BELVILLE *and* HARCOURT.

Belv. AND the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments, thro' Lucy, to Miss Peggy, and here I am in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so, to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and, at the same time, to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress, (and of which I have made the most,) you hinted to him, with a grave, melancholy face, that you were dying for his sister—Gad-a-mercy, nephew! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms—It will do, Dick.

Belv. What could I do, uncle?—It was my last stake, and I played for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick————I don't say you could do better——I only cann't account for your modesty's doing so much: you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him?

Belv. Faith, I cann't say——I am rather doubtful!—he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and shewed me the door.—But what success have you had with Alithea?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose.——This day will produce something: Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

Belv. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs; and if your mistress and mine should, by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport ——let us avoid him—you cann't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can tho', thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Belv. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew; for fools are most easily cheated when they themselves are accessaries; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money, (the common mistress,) by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled? faith, let me snack: I ha'n't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad! I think bubbles are like their brother woodcocks,—go out with the cold weather.

Har. O, pox! he did not hear all, I hope. [*Aside to* BELVILLE.

Spark. Come, you bubbling rogues you, where do we sup?—O, Harcourt! my mistress tells me you have made love, fierce love to her last night, all the play long; ha, ha, ha!—but I——

Har. I make love to her!

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her; but I am sure I know myself.

Belv. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such. [*Bowing.*

Spark. O! your servant, sir; you are at your railiery, are you? You cann't oblige me more—I'm your man—He'll meet with his match—Ha! Harcourt!—Did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturbed at it. —You put the actors and audience into confusion—and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better—I love confusion —and to see folks out of countenance—I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Belv. But I thought you had gone to plays to

laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir!—No, I thank you. 'Gad! I go to a play as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either: and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnably.

Belv. But why should you hate the poor rogues? You have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing. But women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it: 'tis e'en as common with lovers as playing with fans; and you can no more help rhyming to your Phyllis, than drinking to your Phyllis.

Har. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. O yes:—Damn the poets; they turn'd them into burlesque, as they call it: that burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hictius doctius, topsy-turvy, they make a clever, witty thing absolute nonsense! Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song, *twang, twang*, the best I ever wrote?

Har. That may be, and be very easy ridiculed, for all that.

Belv. Favour me with it, sir; I never heard it.

Spark. What! and have all the Park about us?

Har. Which you'll not dislike; and so, pr'ythee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice; and so, have at you.

SONG.

Tell not me of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phyllis;
Tell not me of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies.
Let all whining lovers go hang—
My heart would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.

I am rock to the handsome and pretty,
Can only be touch'd by the witty;
And beauty will ogle in vain,—
The way to my heart's thro' my brain.
Let all whining lovers go hang—
We wits, you must know,
Have two strings to our bow,
To return them their darts with a twang, twang,
And return them their darts with a twang.

At the end of the song, HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE *steal away from* SPARKISH, *and leave him singing——He sinks his voice by degrees, at the surprise of their being gone: then,*

Enter HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE.

Spark. What the deuce did you go away for?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is!—O! hide, hide me from her. [*Hides behind* HARCOURT.

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant. [*Looking at his watch.*

Har. Pray, first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time: faith, it is to a lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Belv. You have need of 'em, I believe.

Spark. Pshaw! pr'ythee hide me.

Enter MOODY, PEGGY, *in boy's clothes, and* ALITHEA.

Har. Your servant, Mr Moody.

Moody. Come along. [*To* PEGGY.

Peg. Lau!—What a sweet, delightful place this is!

Moody. Come along, I say——don't stare about you so——you'll betray yourself.

[*Exit* MOODY, *pulling* PEGGY, ALITHEA *following.*

Har. He does not know us.

Belv. Or he won't know us.

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit* BELVILLE *after them.*

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of Peggy's, I suppose; for he is something like her in the face and gawkiness.

Re-enter BELVILLE.

Belv. By all my hopes, uncle—Peggy, in boy's clothes—I am all over agitation. [*Aside to* HAR.

Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return——Alithea has seen you, Sparkish, and will be angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's better reason, dear friend. I would not go near her now for hers or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing; for tho' I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend: I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they sha'n't, tho'.——Come along.

[*They retire.*

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, *and* ALITHEA.

Moody. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. [*To* ALITHEA.]——The fool her gallant and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here! I begin to be uneasy. [*Aside.*] Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peg. Don't you believe that: I ha'n't half my bellyful of the sights yet.

Moody. Then walk this way.

Peg. Lord! what a power of fine folks are here; and Mr Belville, as I hope to be married! [*Aside.*

Moody. Come along;—what are you muttering at?

Peg. There's the young gentleman there you were so angry about——that's in love with me.

Moody. No, no; he's a dangler after your sister—or pretends to be—but they are all bad alike——Come along, I say. [*He pulls her away.*

[*Exeunt* PEGGY *and* MOODY, BELV. *following.*

SPARKISH, HARCOURT, *and* ALITHEA *come forward.*

Spark. Come, dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one! I hate a man for loving you! If he did love you, 'tis but what he cann't help; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow?

Har. But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself? Let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark. How's that?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself.

Spark. O ho!——that's right again.

Ali. You astonish me, sir, with your want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad! I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: would you would do so—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so. Come back again.

[ALITHEA *walks carelessly to and fro.*

Har. I love you, madam, so——

Spark. How's that! Nay—now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess, I say, I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

[*Clapping his hand on his breast, points to* SPARKISH.

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not:—Now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no; Heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch,—the least of mankind——my dear friend here—I injure him!

Ali. Very well. [*Embracing* SPARKISH.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it:—Madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me, in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you, that I may be assured you are friends, after his honest advice and declaration:—Come, pray, madam, be friends with him.

Enter MOODY *and* PEGGY; BELVILLE *at a distance.*

Moody. What! invite your wife to kiss men! Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me. I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free: I am frank, sir.

Moody. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go. [*To* ALITHEA.

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moody. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do.

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't, as I have to shew fine clothes at a play-house, the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Moody. He that shews his wife, or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so, good-night; for I must to Whitehall.——Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep, if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early, with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt——remember to send your brother. [*Exit* SPARKISH.

Har. You may depend upon me.—Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr Sparkish?

Moody. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must! sir.

Moody. Yes, sir; she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir——for I must be her servant, sir.——Madam——

Moody. Come away, sister; we had been gone if it had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a

man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moody. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure, therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on; but this pretty young gentleman [*Takes hold of* PEGGY] shall stay with us; for I suppose his business is the same with ours,—pleasure.

Moody. 'Sdeath! he knows her, she carries it so sillily; yet, if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. [*Aside.*] Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us? [*To* PEGGY.] Pr'ythee, who is this pretty young fellow?

Moody. One to whom I am a guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. [*Aside.*

Har. Who is he? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moody. Pshaw! do not look upon him so much; he's a poor bashful youth; you'll put him out of countenance. [*Offers to take her away.*

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance——You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another.—Salute him, Dick, a la Françoise.

[BELVILLE *kisses her.*

Moody. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another! [*Endeavours to take hold of her.*

Peg. I am out of my wits——What do you kiss me for? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peg. Nay, how you jeer one; and, pray, don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moody. No, no, no:—Come away, come away. [*To* PEGGY.

Har. Why, what haste are you in? Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moody. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent. How she gazes upon him! The devil! [*Aside.*] Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer: I tell you, my wife stays supper for us.

Har. Does she? Come, then, we'll all go sup with her.

Moody. No, no——now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. [*Aside.*

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed—I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peg. Thank you heartily, sir. [*Bowing.*

Moody. 'Sdeath! she will discover herself yet, in spite of me. [*Aside.*

Belv. And mine too, sir.

Peg. That I will, indeed. [*Bowing.*

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me.

[*Kisses* PEGGY.

Moody. O Heavens! what do I suffer?

Belv. And this for me. [*Kisses* PEGGY.

Peg. Thank you, sir. [*Courtesies.*

Moody. O, the idiot!—now 'tis out——Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips.—Come, come, driveller.

[*Exeunt* MOODY, PEGGY, *and* ALITHEA.

Har. and Belv. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, *and* ALITHEA.

Moody. So they are gone at last.—Sister, stay with Peggy—till I find my servant—Don't let her stir an inch: I'll be back directly.

[*Exit* MOODY.

Re-enter HARCOURT *and* BELVILLE.

Har. What! not gone yet?—Nephew, shew the young gentleman Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

Belv. Shall I have that pleasure?

Peg. With all my heart and soul, sir.

[*Exeunt* BELVILLE *and* PEGGY.

Ali. I cannot consent to it, indeed.

Har. Let 'em look upon the place where so many despairing lovers have been destroyed—You must indulge them—and me too, in a few words. [ALITHEA *and* HARCOURT *struggle.*

Ali. My brother will go distracted.

Har. My nephew is a very modest young man; you may depend upon his prudence.

Ali. Modest, prudent, and your nephew—I cann't believe it, and I must follow them.

[*Going.*

Re-enter MOODY.

Moody. Where! how!—what's become of—gone—whither?———

Ali. In the next walk only, brother.

Moody. Only, only; where, where? [*Exit.*

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned? But, dearest madam——

Re-enter MOODY.

Moody. Gone, gone; not to be found; quite gone; ten thousand plagues go with 'em:—Which way went they?

Ali. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moody. T'other walk—t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Ali. You are too abusive, brother, and too violent about trifles.

Moody. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family, which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to it too, thou legion of———

Ali. Good brother———

Moody. Damn'd, damn'd sister!

Ali. Shew me to my chair, Mr Harcourt—His scurrility has overpower'd me—I will get rid of his tyranny and your importunities, and give my hand to Sparkish to-morrow morning. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to another part of the Park.*

Enter BELVILLE *and Miss* PEGGY.

Belv. No disguise could conceal you from my heart: I pretended not to know you, that I might

deceive the dragon that continually watches over you—but, now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peg. Indeed, Mr Belville, as well as I like you, I cann't think of going away with you so—and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Belv. But, dear Miss Peggy, think of your situation: if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peg. Ay, but, Mr Belville—I am as good as married already——my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but church ceremony to make us one——I call him husband, and he calls me wife already: he made me do so——and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Belv. That's his deceit, my sweet creature—— He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else—You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you, before marriage, to the man you cannot like.

Peg. I'feck! no more I believe it does; sister Alithea's maid has told me as much—she's a very sensible girl.

Belv. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it—— the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after——Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peg. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of Bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for——We can at any time run away without it.

Belv. I see, by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peg. Ay, but it sha'n't though—I thank him for that.

Belv. If you marry without his consent, he can but seize upon half your fortune—The other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are our own——Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever. [*Kneels, and presses her hand.*

Peg. I'feckins! but we won't——Your fine talk has bewitch'd me.

Belv. 'Tis you have bewitch'd me——thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity——Let us fly, with the wings of love, to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peg. And so we will then—there, squeeze me again by the hand.—Now run away with me, and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say. [*Going.*] Boo! here he is.

Enter MOODY *hastily, and meets them.*

Moody. O! there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing!—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again—Where have you been, you puppy?

Peg. Been, Bud!—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Belv. From one end to the other, sir. [*Confusedly.*

Moody. But not where I was to be found, you young devil you.—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peg. I'm always frighten'd when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you, so I should. [*Pouting.*

Moody. But I'll take care you don't.

Peg. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, Bud. [BELVILLE *makes signs of dislike.*

Moody. I am not in the humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady?—gentleman, I would say—Blisters on my tongue!

Peg. Fie, Bud, you have told all.

Belv. I have been as civil as I could to the young stranger; and, if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and shew the young spark Rosamond's pond; for he has not seen it yet—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me?

Peg. As my guardian pleases.

Moody. No, no, it does not please me—whatever I think he ought to see, I shall shew him myself—You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will—and the bottom of it, if you will—And so, sir, your humble servant.

[*Exeunt* MOODY, *with* PEGGY *under his arm;* BELVILLE *a contrary way.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—MOODY'S *House.*

Enter LUCY *and* ALITHEA.

Lucy. Well, madam, now I have dress'd you, and set you out with so many ornaments, and spent so much time upon you, and all this for no other purpose but to bury you alive; for I look upon Mr Sparkish's bed to be little better than a grave.

Ali. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr Harcourt for ever from your sight? How could you be so hard hearted?

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard hearted.

Lucy. No, no; 'twas stark love and kindness, I warrant?

Ali. It was so:—I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive, or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to a man, than to give him your person, without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. I'll retrieve it for him after I am married.

Lucy. The woman that marries to love better, will be as much mistaken as the rake that marries to live better.

Ali. What nonsense you talk!

Lucy. 'Tis a melancholy truth, madam.—Marrying to increase love, is like gaming to become rich———Alas! you only lose what little stock you had before———There are many woful examples of it in this righteous town!

Ali. I find by your rhetoric you have been bribed to betray me.

Lucy. Only by his merit, that has bribed your heart, you see, against your word and rigid honour.

Ali. Come, pray talk no more of honour, nor Mr Harcourt; I wish the other would come and secure my fidelity to him, and his right in me.

Lucy. You will marry him then?

Ali. Certainly; I have given him already my word, and will my hand too, to make it good, when he comes.

Lucy. Well, I wish I may never stick a pin more, if he be not an arrant natural to t'other fine gentleman.

Ali. I own he wants the wit of Harcourt, which I will dispense withal for another want he has, which is want of jealousy, which men of wit seldom want.

Lucy. Lord, madam, what should you do with a fool to your husband? You intend to be honest, don't you? Then that husbandly virtue, credulity, is thrown away upon you.

Ali. He only that could suspect my virtue, should have cause to do it; 'tis Sparkish's confidence in my truth, that obliges me to be faithful to him.

Lucy. What, faithful to a creature who is incapable of loving and esteeming you as he ought! To throw away your beauty, wit, accomplishments, sweet temper—

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I cann't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever—What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of?

Ali. How, Lucy!

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam; 'tis never too late to repent—Take a man, and give up a coxcomb, I say.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em. [*Exit Servant.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. Go with me, Lucy.

Lucy. Not I, indeed, madam——If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself—What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome. ———Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she cann't have a better privy-counsellor than myself—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber in* MOODY'S *House.*

Enter MOODY *and* PEGGY.

Moody. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me. This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! [*Aside.*] Tell me, I say, for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say———

Peg. Lord, ha'n't I told it a hundred times over

Moody. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least circumstance; for if her story be false, she is so too.—[*Aside.*] Come, how was't, baggage?

Peg. Lord, what a pleasure you take to hear it, sure?

Moody. No, you take more in telling it, I find; but speak, how was't? No lies—I saw him kiss you—he kiss'd you before my face.

Peg. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither; for, to say truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moody. The devil!—you was satisfied with it then, and would do it again?——

Peg. Not unless he should force me.

Moody. Force you, changeling!

Peg. If I had struggled too much, you know—he would have known I had been a woman; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moody. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down, would not you?

Peg. With what, Bud?——I could not help myself—besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so—that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too, as well as me—and if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moody. This is worse and worse—so 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love! 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding; out of Nature's hands they came plain, open, silly, and fit for slaves, as she and Heav'n intended 'em; but damned Love—well, I must strangle that little monster, whilst I can deal with him. [*Aside.*]—Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peg. Yes, I will Bud. What's the matter now? [*Aside.*

Moody. Why don't you go? [*Exit.*

Peg. I'm going.

Moody. This young fellow loves her, and she loves him—the rest is all hypocrisy—How the young modest villain endeavour'd to deceive me!

But I'll crush this mischief in the shell—Why should women have more invention in love than men? it can only be, because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil. [*Aside.*] [*Enter* PEGGY, *with pen, ink, and paper.*] Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peg. Ay, dear, dear Bud; but I cann't do't very well.

Moody. I wish you could not at all.

Peg. But what should I write for?

Moody. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peg. O Lord, to the young gentleman a letter!

Moody. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peg. Lord, you do but jeer: sure you jest.

Moody. I am not so merry: come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peg. What, do you think I am a fool?

Moody. She's afraid I would not dictate any love to him, therefore she's unwilling. [*Aside.*]—But you had best begin.

Peg. Indeed and indeed, but I won't, so I won't.

Moody. Why?

Peg. Because he's in town; you may send for him here, if you will.

Moody. Very well, you would have him brought to you?—is it come to this? I say, take the pen and ink and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peg. Lord, what do you make a fool of me for?—Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country? now he's in town, and I am in town too; therefore I cann't write to him, you know.

Moody. So, I am glad it is no worse; she's innocent enough yet. [*Aside.*] Yes, you may, when your husband bids, write letters to people who are in town.

Peg. O, may I so? then I am satisfied.

Moody. Come, begin—*Sir*—— [*Dictates.*

Peg. Sha'n't I say, *Dear sir?* you know one says always something more than bare sir.

Moody. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this pen-knife in your face.

Peg. Nay, good Bud—*Sir*—— [*Writes.*

Moody. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces*——Write!

Peg. Nay, why should I say so? you know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moody. Write!

Peg. Let me put out *loath'd.*

Moody. Write, I say.

Peg. Well then. [*Writes.*

Moody. Let me see what you have writ.——*Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces*——[*Reads the paper.*] Thou impudent creature, where is *nauseous* and *loath'd?*

Peg. I cann't abide to write such filthy words.

Moody. Once more, write as I'd have you, and question it not, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief. [*Holds up the pen-knife.*

Peg. O Lord, I will.

Moody. So—so—let's see now? *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces;*——*go on;*——*yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them*——*so.* [*She writes.*

Peg. I have writ it.

Moody. O! then——*I then concealed myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies*— [*She writes.*

Peg. *To avoid*——

Moody. *Your insolencies*——

Peg. *Your insolencies.* [*Writes.*

Moody. *The same reason, now I am out of your hands*—

Peg. So—— [*She writes.*

Moody. *Makes me own to you my unfortunate*——*though innocent frolic, of being in man's clothes.* [*She writes.*

Peg. So——

Moody. *That you may for evermore*——

Peg. *Evermore*—

Moody. *Evermore cease to pursue her who hates and detests you.* [*She writes.*

Peg. So——h. [*Sighs.*

Moody. What do you sigh for?—*Detests you—as much as she loves her husband and her honour*—

Peg. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I should write such a letter.

Moody. What, he'd expect a kinder from you? Come, now your name only.

Peg. What, sha'n't I say your most faithful humble servant till death?

Moody. No, tormenting fiend—Her style, I find, would be very soft. [*Aside.*] Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a candle, and write on the outside,—*For Mr Belville.* [*Exit* MOODY.

Peg. *For Mr Belville.*——So—I am glad he is gone—Hark! I hear a noise.

Moody. [*Within.*] Well, well, but cann't you call again—Well, walk in then.—

Peg. [*Goes to the door.*] I'feck, there's folks with him—that's pure—now I may think a little—Why should I send dear Mr Belville such a letter?—Can one have no shift? ah! a London woman would have had a hundred presently.—Stay—what if I should write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon it too?—Ay, but then my guardian would see't—I don't know what to do—But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will—for I will not send this letter to poor Mr Belville, come what will on't. [*She writes, and repeats what she writes.*] *Dear sweet Mr Belville*—so—*My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't*—so—*and would have me say I hate you—but I won't*—there—*for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together*—so—*I could not help treading on your toe under the table—so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can—so no more at present from one who is, dear, dear, poor, dear Mr Belville, your loving friend till death, Margaret Thrift.*—So—Now wrap it up just like the t'other—so—Now write,—*For Mr Belville.*—— But oh! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian. [*Puts the letter in her bosom.*

Enter MOODY, *with a candle and sealing wax.*

Moody. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me, but I fear 'twas to my wife. [*Aside.*] What, have you done?

Peg. Ay, ay, Bud, just now.

Moody. Let's see't; what do you tremble for? [*He opens and reads the first letter.*

Peg. So I had been served if I had given him this. [*Aside.*

Moody. Come, where's the wax and seal?

Peg. Lord, what shall I do now? Nay, then I have it.—[*Aside.*] Pray let me see't. Lord, you think me so arrant a fool, I cannot seal a letter; I will do't, so I will. [*Snatches the letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*

Moody. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peg. So, ha'n't I done it curiously? I think I have—there's my letter going to Mr Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. [*Aside.*

Moody. 'Tis very well, but I warrant you would not have it go now?

Peg. Yes, indeed, but I would, Bud, now.

Moody. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber, till I come back; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window, when I am gone; for I have a spy in the street. [*Puts her into the chamber.*] At least 'tis fit she thinks so; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us.—Now I have secured all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to* BELVILLE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter LUCY *and* BELVILLE.

Lucy. I run great risks, to be sure, to serve the young lady, and you, sir—but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Belv. As you are not mercenary, Mrs Lucy, I ought to be the more generous—give me leave to present you with this trifle, [*Gives a ring*] not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Tho' I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it, as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake—and now to business.

Belv. But has the dear creature resolved?

Lucy. Has she—why, she will run away and marry you in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison—so you, in your turn, must take care not to have your qualms—I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Belv. I assure you, Mrs Lucy, that I am no bully in love, and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say, but talking does no business—Stay at home till you hear from us.

Belv. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

MOODY *speaking without.*

Moody. But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr Belville, I hear Mr Moody's voice—Where shall I hide myself?—if he sees me, we are all undone.

Belv. This is our cursed luck again—What the devil can he want here? I have lost my senses—get into this closet till he's gone. [*Puts* LUCY *into the closet.*] This visit means something; I am quite confounded—Don't you stir, Lucy—I must put the best face upon the matter—Now for it— [*Takes a book and reads.*

Enter MOODY.

Moody. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking through forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below that you were with company.

Belv. Yes, sir, the best company. [*Shews his book.*] When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moody. And I chose to interrupt your conversation! the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Belv. You shall be always welcome to me; but you seem ruffled, sir; what brings you hither, and seemingly out of humour?

Moody. Your impertinency—I beg pardon—your modesty, I mean.

Belv. My impertinency!

Moody. Your impertinency.

Belv. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges; but you must consider, youth has its privileges too; and as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I'm not oblig'd to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moody. They who wrong me, young man, must bear with both! and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Belv. I could have wish'd, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moody. If that's all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed! There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility——Look you there, sir. [*Gives a letter.*

Belv. What is it?

Moody. Only a love-letter, sir;——and from my wife.

Belv. How, is it from your wife?—hum and hum— [*Reads.*

Moody. Even from my wife, sir; am I not wonderous kind and civil to you now? But you'll not think her so. [*Aside.*

Belv. Ha! Is this a trick of his or hers? [*Aside.*

Moody. The gentleman's surpris'd, I find.—What, you expected a kinder letter?

Belv. No, faith, not I; how could I?

Moody. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did: a man so young, and well made as you are, must needs

be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Belv. But what should this mean? It seems he knows not what the letter contains. [*Aside.*

Moody. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Belv. Faith, I cann't help it.

Moody. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendship and kindness, and have shew'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband—am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant?

Belv. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world; ha, ha, ha, ha! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her, I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty soever I do't; and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moody. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine, kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome——so, Mr Modesty, your servant.

[*As* MOODY *is going out, he is met by* SPARKISH.

Spark. So, brother-in-law, that was to have been, I have follow'd you from home to Belville's: I have strange news for you.

Moody. What, are you wiser than you were this morning?

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I sha'n't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moody. Insensibility you mean—I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, sir.

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums—I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moody. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Belv. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why, you must know, we had settled to be married——it is the same thing to me, whether I am married or not——I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off or on, 'tis the same thing to me; but the thing was fix'd, you know——You and my aunt brought it about——I had no hand in it. And to shew you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms, and the church would have finish'd me still to harder——but she was taken with her tantrums!

Moody. Damn your tantrums——come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother——abused him like a pick-pocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moody. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister—I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin-brother.

Moody. What, Frank told you so?

Spark. Ay, and Ned too—they were both in a story.

Moody. What an incorrigible fellow!——Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out. ——She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church—then twirl'd round upon her heel—call'd me every name she could think of; and when she had exhausted her imagination, and tir'd her tongue—no easy matter, let me tell you—she call'd her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good-morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what they are.

Moody. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story; I have not had such a laugh for this half year—Thou art a most ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit* MOODY.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Belv. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em; ha, ha, ha!

LUCY *in the closet, laughs.*

Spark. Hey-day! what's that? What, have you raised a devil in the closet, to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep—— [*Going to the closet.*

Belv. Indeed but you must not.

Spark. 'Twas a woman's voice.

Belv. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee, introduce me.

Belv. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine. So my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you—I must entreat you to withdraw—Pr'ythee, excuse me, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Belv. I cann't help that; ha, ha, ha!

Spark. My character's at stake—I shall be thought a damn'd silly fellow—I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit.*

Belv. Ha, ha, ha!

LUCY *peeping out.*

Lucy. Ha, ha, ha! O, dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst——what an adventure! [*Laughs.*

Belv. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter——and by the dragon himself——There's a spirit for you!

Lucy. There's simplicity for you! shew me a town-bred girl with half the genius—Send you a love-letter, and by a jealous guardian too! ha, ha, ha!—'Tis too much—too much——Ha, ha, ha!——Well, Mr Belville—the world goes as it should do—my mistress will exchange her fool for a wit, Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow: I shall dance at two weddings—be well rewarded by both parties—get a husband myself, and be as happy as the best of you—and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Belv. Success attend you, Lucy. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—MOODY's *House.* PEGGY *alone, leaning on her elbow. A table, pen, ink, and paper.*

Peg. WELL, 'tis e'en so; I have got the London disease they call love. I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr Belville! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague; for when I think of my guardian, I tremble, and am in a cold sweat; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr Belville, my hot fit comes. and I am all in a fever indeed: my own chamber is tedious to me, and I would fain be removed to his, and then methinks I should be very well. Ah! poor Mr Belville! Well, I cannot, will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, *who, seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her shoulder, snatches the paper from her.*

Moody. What, writing more letters?

Peg. O, Lord! Bud, why d'ye fright me so?

[*She offers to run out, he stops her and reads.*

Moody. How's this! nay, you shall not stir, madam. *Dear, dear, dear Mr Belville.*—Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't.—[*Reads.*]—*First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done, had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which, if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loathe, nauseate, and detest*—(now you can write these filthy words.) But what follows?—*therefore, I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never, I assure you, of my choice, but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me, as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our*—our—(what is to follow our—speak, what) our journey into the country, I suppose.—Oh, woman, damn'd woman! and love, damn'd love, their old tempter; for this is one of his miracles: in a moment, he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle that were dumb before.—But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together.

[*Draws his sword.*

Peg. O Lord! O Lord! you are such a passionate man, Bud!

Moody. Come, take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended; if you are false in a tittle, I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this, as you deserve. [*Lays his hand on his sword.*] Write what was to follow—let's see—(*You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our*)—what follows our———

[PEGGY *takes the pen and writes.*

Peg. Must all out then, Bud?—Look you there then.

Moody. Let's see——(*for I can defer no longer our wedding—Your slighted Alithea.*) What's the meaning of this? my sister's name to't! speak, unriddle.

Peg. Yes, indeed, Bud.

Moody. But why her name to't? speak——speak, I say.

Peg. Ay, but you'll tell her again: if you would not tell her again——

Moody. I will not; I am stunn'd, my head turns round. Speak.

Peg. Won't you tell her, indeed and indeed?

Moody. No; speak, I say.

Peg. She'll be angry with me; but I had rather she should be angry with me than you, Bud. And to tell you the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moody. Ha!—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. [*Aside.*] Could she come to you to teach you, since I had locked you up alone?

Peg. Oh, thro' the key-hole, Bud.

Moody. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself.

Peg. Why, she said because———for I was unwilling to do it.

Moody. Because, what———because———

Peg. Because, lest Mr Belville, as he was so young, should be inconstant, and refuse her, or be vain afterwards, and shew the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Moody. Belville again!———Am I to be deceived again with that young hypocrite?

Peg. You have deceived yourself, Bud, you have indeed———I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could———but you must know it———and shall know it too.

[*Cries.*

Moody. Dry your eyes.

Peg. You always thought he was hankering after me—Good lau! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him—they have had private meetings——and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you thought it was me——I would have discovered all—but she made me swear to deceive you, and so I have finely—have not I, Bud?

Moody. Why did you write this foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peg. To carry on the joke, Bud—to oblige them.

Moody. And will nothing serve her but that great baby?—he's too young for her to marry.

Peg. Why do you marry me then? 'tis the same thing, Bud.

Moody. No, no, 'tis quite different—How innocent she is—This changeling could not invent this lie; but, if she could, why should she? She might think I should soon discover it. [*Aside.*] —But hark you, madam, your sister went out in the morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peg. Alack-a-day! she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moody. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peg. O Lord! then he'll discover all.—[*Aside.*] Pray hold, Bud; what, d'ye mean to discover me! she'll know I have told you then. Pray, Bud, let me talk with her first.

Moody. I must speak with her, to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peg. Pray, dear Bud, don't, till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else.

Moody. Go then and bid her come to me.

Peg. Yes, yes, Bud.

Moody. Let me see———

Peg. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wit's end.

[*Aside, and exit.*

Moody. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister, than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure—I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Peg. [*Re-enters*] O Lord, Bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Moody. Won't she come hither?

Peg. No, no, she's asham'd to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr Belville, she says ——She must speak with him, before she discovers all to you—or even sees you. She says too, that you shall know the reason by and by. Pray let her have her way, Bud——she won't be pacified if you don't——and will never forgive me ——For my part, Bud, I believe, but don't tell any body, they have broken a piece of silver between them, or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moody. Pooh! you fool——she ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! but Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune———tell her so.

Peg. I will, Bud. [*Going.*

Moody. Stay, stay, Peggy———let her have her own way—she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her———that will be best——let her have her whim.

Peg. You're in the right, Bud——for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so—I'll be hang'd if her eyes a'n't swelled out of her head, she is in such a piteous taking.

Moody. Belville sha'n't use her ill, I'll take care of that—if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to it—but she had better go first ——I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption: and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peg. Lau, Bud, how wise you are! I wish I had half your wisdom; you see every thing at once———Stand a one side then, and I'll tell her you are gone to your room, and when she passes by, you may follow her.

Moody. And so I will—she sha'n't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's.

Peg. Now for it. [*Exit* PEGGY.

Moody. My case is something better—for suppose the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife: I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, tho' differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. [*Steps on one side.*

Enter PEGGY, *dress'd like* ALITHEA; *and as she passes over the stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.*

Peg. Heigho! [*Exit.*

Moody. [*Comes forward.*] There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing; a woful example of the fatal consequences of a town education ——but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her—but first I'll secure my own property. [*Opens the door and calls.*]—Peggy! Peggy!—my dear!—I will return as soon as possible—do you hear me? Why don't you answer? You may read in the book I bought you 'till I come back—As the Jew says in the play, Fast bind, fast find. [*Locks the door.*] This is the best, and only security for female affections. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Park before* BELVILLE'S *Door.*

Enter SPARKISH, *fuddled.*

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or any body that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em——When a man has wit, and a great deal of it—Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it—'tis a lighted match to gunpowder——the mine is sprung, and the poor devils are toss'd heels uppermost in an instant. I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a damn'd ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present.—I'll consult Belville—this is his house—he's my friend too—and no fool. It shall be so—damn it, I must not be ridiculous. [*Going to the door,*

sees PEGGY *coming.*] Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way —Come on, Madam Alithea; now for a smart fire, and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY.

Peg. Dear me, I begin to tremble—there is Mr Sparkish, and I cann't get to Mr Belville's house without passing by him—he sees me—and will discover me—he seems in liquor too!—bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little—she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. [*Approaching her.*] I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday——What, nothing to say for yourself? Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall Mall.

Peg. I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

[*Tries to pass him.*

Spark. Not a step farther shall you go, 'till you give me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous. What, dumb still—then, if you won't by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. [*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him; but he catches hold of her before she reaches* BELVILLE's *door.*] Not quite so fast, if you please. Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue—or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY.

Moody. Hands off, you ruffian—how dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner?

[MOODY *takes her from* SPARKISH.

Spark. She's my property, sir—transferred to me by you—and though I would give her up to any body for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, tho' it is not worth that—

[*Snaps his fingers.*

Moody. There's a fellow to be a husband——you are justified in despising him, and flying from him—I'll defend you with my purse and my sword——knock at the door, and let me speak to Belville.——[PEGGY *knocks at the door; when the footman opens it, she runs in.*]——Is your master at home, friend?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moody. Tell him then that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman, and that by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection; if he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman.*]—And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better shew it upon this occasion, for you are still damn'd ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like!——Look ye, Mr Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court—so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for—she's not worth my sword! but if you'll fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moody. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tid-bit at home—much good may it do him.

Moody. And you think so, puppy—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff—ha, ha, ha!

Moody. Then thy folly is complete—ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocence—ha, ha, ha!

[*They laugh at each other.*

Enter HARCOURT.

Moody. Who have we here?

Spark. What, my boy Harcourt!

Moody. What brings you here, sir?

Har. I follow'd you to Belville's, to present a near relation of yours, and a nearer one of mine, to you. [*Exit.*

Spark. What's the matter now?

Re-enter HARCOURT *with* ALITHEA.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs Harcourt to you.

Spark. Alithea! your wife!——Mr Moody, are you in the clouds too?

Moody. If I am not in a dream——I am the most miserable waking dog, that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment!

Har. Why so, Jack?——can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it? [MOODY *walks about in a rage.*

Spark. This is very fine, very fine indeed—where's your story about Belville now, Squire Moody? Pr'ythee don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet——but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moody. Zounds! I cann't bear it.

[*Goes hastily to* BELVILLE's *door, and knocks hard.*

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter?

Moody. The devil's the matter! the devil and woman together. [*Knocks again.*] I'll break the door down if they won't answer. [*Knocks again.*

Footman appears in the balcony.

Foot. What would your honour please to have?

Moody. Your master, rascal!

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir, and the moment he is finished he will do himself the pleasure to wait upon you.

Moody. You sneering villain you—If your master does not produce that she devil, who is now with him, and who, with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house. [*Exit Foot.*

Spark. Gad so! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity, rural simplicity!

'Egad! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus here, I shall be so ravish'd, that I will give this couple a wedding-dinner. Pray, Mr Moody, who's damn'd ridiculous now?

Moody. [*Going to* SPARKISH.] Look ye, sir ——don't grin, for if you dare to shew your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes.

Spark. [*Quite calm.*] Very fine, faith——but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

BELVILLE *appears in the balcony.*

Belv. What does my good friend want with me?

Moody. Are you a villain, or are you not?

Belv. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moody. What have you done with the girl, sir?

Belv. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness——

Moody. She's my wife, and I demand her.

PEGGY *appears in the balcony.*

Peg. No, but I a'n't——What's the matter, Bud, are you angry with me?

Moody. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peg. How dare you look me in the face, Bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? Have not you pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not?—And have not you been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr Belville, I should not have married at all—so I should not.

[BELVILLE *and* PEGGY *retire from the balcony.*

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moody. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment——my fate has o'ercome——I can struggle no more with it. [*Sighs.*] What is left me?—I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon ——I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonth's provision into it—cut down my draw-bridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself——then will I curse the world, and every individual in it—and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation of the other [*Exit.*

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha! [*Enter* BELVILLE *and* PEGGY.] Look ye, Belville, I wish you joy, with all my heart—you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a Tartar—that's no business of mine——If you want evidence for Mr Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill will to that pair. I wish you happy. [*To* ALITHEA *and* HARCOURT.] Tho' I am sure they'll be miserable—and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*

Peg. I hope you forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick; indeed I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is—But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peg. I am sure I'll do any thing to please my Bud, but marry him.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY PEGGY.

BUT you, good gentry, what say you to this?
You are to jud e me—have I done amiss?
I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones,
Except old folks, who hanker after young ones;
Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty,
'Twas a sad life;——and then he was near fifty!
I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,
So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue!
Have I, pray ladies speak, done very wrong?
As for poor Bud, 'twas honest to deceive him!
More virtuous sure, to cheat him than to grieve him.
Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut,
Marry for love! they cry, the country put!
Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool:
But I'm for loving always, like a fool.
With half my fortune I would rather part,
Than be all finery, with an aching heart:
For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me;
And, as I know no better, pray excuse me.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

THE

PLAIN DEALER.

BY WYCHERLY.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY THE PLAIN DEALER.

I THE Plain Dealer am to act to-day;
And my rough part begins before the play.
First, you who scribble, yet hate all that write,
And keep each other company in spite,
As rivals in your common mistress, Fame,
And, with faint praises, one another damn,
'Tis a good play (we know) you cann't forgive,
But grudge yourselves the pleasure you receive;
Our scribbler, therefore, bluntly bid me say,
He would not have the wits pleas'd here to-day.
Next, you, the fine, loud gentlemen o' th' pit,
Who damn all plays; yet if y'ave any wit,
'Tis but what here you spunge, and daily get;
Poets, like friends to whom you are in debt,
You hate: and so rooks laugh, to see undone
Those pushing gamesters whom they live upon.
Well, you are sparks, and still will be i' th' fashion;
Rail, then, at plays, to hide your obligation.
Now, you shrewd judges who the boxes sway,
Leading the ladies hearts and sense astray,
And, for their sakes, see all, and hear no play,
Correct your cravats, foretops, lock behind;
The dress and breeding of the play ne'er mind.
Plain dealing is, you'll say, quite out of fashion;
You'll hate it here, as in a dedication:
And your fair neighbours, in a limning poet,
No more than in a painter will allow it.
Pictures too like, the ladies will not please:
They must be drawn too here like goddesses.
You, as at Lely's too, would truncheon wield,
And look like heroes in a painted field;
But the course dauber of the coming scenes,
To follow life and nature only means;
Displays you as you are; makes his fine woman
A mercenary jilt, and true to no man:
His men of wit and pleasure of the age
Are as dull rogues as ever cumber'd stage:
He draws a friend, only to custom just,
And makes him naturally break his trust.
I, only, act a part like none of you;
And yet, you'll say, it is a fool's part too,—
An honest man, who, like you, never winks
At faults, but, unlike you, speaks what he thinks:
The only fool who ne'er found patron yet;
For truth is now a fault, as well as wit.
And where else but on stages do we see
Truth pleasing, or rewarded honesty?
Which our bold poet does this day in me.
If not to th' honest, be to th' prosperous kind;
Some friends at court let the Plain Dealer find.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MANLY, *of an honest, surly, nice humour, supposed first, in the time of the Dutch war, to have procured the command of a ship, out of honour, not interest, and chusing a sea-life, only to avoid the world.*

FREEMAN, *Manly's lieutenant, a gentleman well educated, but of a broken fortune, a complier with the age.*

VARNISH, *Manly's bosom and only friend.*

NOVEL, *a pert, railing coxcomb, and an admirer of novelties, makes love to Olivia.*

Major OLDFOX, *an old, impertinent fop, given to scribbling, makes love to the Widow Blackacre.*

My Lord PLAUSIBLE, *a ceremonious, supple, commending coxcomb, in love with Olivia.*

JERRY BLACKACRE, *a true raw squire, under age and his mother's government, bred to the law.*

WOMEN.

OLIVIA, *Manly's mistress.*

FIDELIA, *in love with Manly, and followed him to sea in man's clothes.*

ELIZA, *cousin to Olivia.*

LETTICE, *Olivia's woman.*

The Widow BLACKACRE, *a petulant, litigious widow, always in law, and mother to Squire Jerry.*

Lawyers, Knights of the Post, Bailiffs, and Aldermen, a Bookseller's 'Prentice, a Foot-boy, Sailors, Waiters, and Attendants.

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Captain* MANLY'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Captain MANLY *surlily, and my Lord* PLAUSIBLE *following him, and two Sailors behind.*

Man. Tell not me, my good Lord Plausible, of your decorums, supercilious forms, and slavish ceremonies; your little tricks, which you, the spaniels of the world, do daily over and over, for, and to one another, not out of love or duty, but your servile fear.

L. Plau. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are too passionate, and I must humbly beg your pardon, and leave to tell you, they are the arts and rules the prudent of the world walk by.

Man. Let 'em. But I'll have no leading-strings; I can walk alone; I hate a harness, and will not tug on in a faction, kissing my leader behind, that another slave may do the like to me.

L. Plau. What, will you be singular then, like nobody? follow love, and esteem nobody?

Man. Rather than be general, like you; follow every body, court and kiss every body; though, perhaps, at the same time, you hate every body.

L. Plau. Why, seriously, with your pardon, my dear friend——

Man. With your pardon, my no friend, I will not, as you do, whisper my hatred or my scorn, call a man fool or knave, by signs or mouths over his shoulder, whilst you have him in your arms; for such as you, like common whores and pickpockets, are only dangerous to those you embrace.

L. Plau. Such as I! Heavens defend me—— upon my honour——

Man. Upon your title, my lord, if you'd have me believe you.

L. Plau. Well, then, as I am a person of honour, I never attempted to abuse or lessen any person in my life.

Man. What, you were afraid?

L. Plau. No; but, seriously, I hate to do a rude thing: so, faith, I speak well of all mankind.

Man. I thought so; but know, that the speaking well of all mankind is the worst kind of detraction; for it takes away the reputation of the few good men in the world, by making all alike: now, I speak ill of most men, because they deserve it; I that can do a rude thing, rather than an unjust thing.

L. Plau. Well, tell not me, my dear friend, what people deserve; I ne'er mind that; I, like an author in a dedication, never speak well of a man for his sake, but my own; I will not disparage any man, to disparage myself; for to speak ill of people behind their backs is not like a person of honour; and, truly, to speak ill of 'em to their faces is not like a complaisant person: but if I did say or do an ill thing to any, it should be sure to be behind their backs, out of pure good manners.

Man. Very well; but I, that am an unmannerly sea fellow, if I ever speak well of people, (which is very seldom indeed,) it should be sure to be behind their backs; and if I would say or do ill to any, it should be to their faces: I would jostle a proud, strutting, over-looking coxcomb at the head of his sycophants, rather than put out my tongue at him when he were past me; would frown in the arrogant, big, dull face of an overgrown knave of business, rather than vent my spleen against him when his back were turn'd; would give fawning slaves the lie, whilst they embrace or commend me; cowards, whilst they brag; call a rascal by no other title, though his father had left him a duke; laugh at fools aloud, before their mistresses; and must desire people to leave me, when their visits grow at last as troublesome as they were at first impertinent.

L. Plau. I would not have my visits troublesome.

Man. The only way to be sure not to have 'em troublesome, is to make 'em when people are not at home; for your visits, like other good turns, are most obliging when made or done to a man in his absence. A pox! why should any one, because he has nothing to do, go and disturb another man's business?

L. Plau. I beg your pardon, my dear friend. What! you have business?

Man. If you have any, I would not detain your lordship.

L. Plau. Detain me, dear sir! I can never have enough of your company.

Man. I'm afraid I should be tiresome: I know not what you think.

L. Plau. Well, dear sir, I see you would have me gone.

Man. But I see you won't. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. Your most faithful———

Man. God be wi' ye, my lord.

L. Plau. Your most humble——

Man. Farewell.

L. Plau. And eternally——

Man. And eternally ceremony—then the devil take thee eternally. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. You shall use no ceremony, by my life.

Man. I do not intend it.

L. Plau. Why do you stir then?

Man. Only to see you out of doors, that I may shut 'em against more welcomes.

L. Plau. Nay, faith, that shall not pass upon your most faithful, humble servant.

Man. Nor this any more upon me. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. Well, you are too strong for me.

Man. I'd sooner be visited by the plague; for that only would keep a man from visits, and his doors shut. [*Aside.*

[*Exit, thrusting out my Lord* PLAUSIBLE.

Manent Sailors.

1*st Sail.* Here's a finical fellow, Jack! What a brave fair-weather captain of a ship he would make!

2*d Sail.* He a captain of a ship! it must be when she's in the dock then; for he looks like one of those that get the king's commissions for hulls, to sell a king's ship, when a brave fellow has fought her almost to a long-boat.

1*st Sail.* On my conscience, then, Jack, that's the reason our bully tar sunk our ship; not only that the Dutch might not have her, but that the courtiers, who laugh at wooden legs, might not make her prize.

2*d Sail.* A pox of his sinking, Tom! We have made a base, broken, short voyage of it.

1*st Sail.* Ay, your brisk dealers in honour always make quick returns with their ship to the dock, and their men to the hospitals: 'tis, let me see, just a month since we set out of the river, and the wind was almost as cross to us as the Dutch.

2*d Sail.* Well, I forgive him sinking my own poor trunk, if he would but have given me time and leave to have saved black Kate of Wapping's small venture.

1*st Sail.* Faith, I forgive him, since, as the purser told me, he sunk the value of five or six thousand pound of his own, with which he was to settle himself somewhere in the Indies; for our merry lieutenant was to succeed him in his commission for the ship back; for he was resolved never to return again for England.

2*d Sail.* So it seemed, by his fighting.

1*st Sail.* No, but he was a weary of this side of the world here, they say.

2*d Sail.* Ay, or else he would not have bid so fair for a passage into t'other.

1*st Sail.* Jack, thou think'st thyself in the forecastle, thou'rt so waggish; but I tell you, then, he had a mind to go live and beak himself on the sunny side of the globe.

2*d Sail.* What, out of any discontent? for he's always as dogged as an old tarpaulin, when hindered of a voyage by a young pantaloon captain.

1*st Sail.* 'Tis true; I never saw him pleased but in the fight, and then he looked like one of us coming from the pay-table, with a new lining to our hats under our arms.

2*d Sail.* A pox! he's like the Bay of Biscay,—rough and angry, let the wind blow where 'twill.

1*st Sail.* Nay, there's no more dealing with him than with the land in a storm; no near—

2*d Sail.* 'Tis a hurry-durry blade. Dost thou remember, after we had tugged hard the old leaky long-boat, to save his life, when I welcomed him a-shore, he gave me a box on the ear, and called me fawning water-dog.

Enter MANLY *and* FREEMAN.

1*st Sail.* Hold thy peace, Jack, and stand by; the foul weather's coming.

Man. You rascal dogs, how could this tame thing get through you?

1*st Sail.* Faith, to tell your honour the truth, we were at Hob in the Hall, and whilst my brother and I were quarrelling about a cast, he slunk by us.

2*d Sail.* He's a sneaking fellow, I warrant for't.

Man. Have more care for the future, you slaves. Go, and, with drawn cutlasses, stand at the

stair-foot, and keep all that ask for me from coming up: suppose you are guarding the scuttle to the powder-room: let none enter here, at your or their peril.

1st Sail. No; for the danger would be the same; you would blow them and us up, if we should.

2d Sail. Must no one come to you, sir?

Man. No man, sir.

1st Sail. No man, sir? but a woman, then, an't like your honour———

Man. No woman neither, you impertinent dog. Would you be pimping? A sea pimp is the strangest monster she has.

2d Sail. Indeed, an't like your honour, 'twill be hard for us to deny a woman any thing, since we are so newly come on shore.

1st Sail. We'll let no old woman come up, though it were our trusting landlady at Wapping.

Man. Would you be witty, you brandy cask you? You become a jest as ill as you do a horse. Be gone, you dogs; I hear a noise on the stairs.

[*Exeunt Sailors.*

Free. Faith, I am sorry you would let the fop go; I intended to have had some sport with him.

Man. Sport with him! A pox, then, why did you not stay? you should have enjoyed your coxcomb, and had him to yourself for me.

Free. No, I should not have cared for him without you neither; for the pleasure which fops afford is like that of drinking, only good when 'tis shared; and a fool, like a bottle, which would make you merry in company, will make you dull alone. But how the devil could you turn a man of his quality down stairs? You use a lord with very little ceremony, it seems.

Man. A lord! What, thou art one of those who esteem men only by the marks and value fortune has set upon 'em, and never consider intrinsic worth? but counterfeit honour will not be current with me: I weigh the man, not his title: 'tis not the king's stamp can make the metal better, or heavier: your lord is a leaden shilling, which you may bend every way, and debases the stamp he bears, instead of being raised by't.—Here again, you slaves?

Enter Sailors.

1st Sail. Only to receive farther instructions, an't like your honour.—What if a man should bring you money; should we turn him back?

Man. All men, I say.—Must I be pester'd with you too? You dogs, away.

2d Sail. Nay, I know one man your honour would not have us hinder coming to you, I'm sure.

Man. Who's that? speak quickly, slaves.

2d Sail. Why, a man that should bring you a challenge; for though you refuse money, I'm sure you love fighting too well to refuse that.

Man. Rogue, rascal, dog!

[*Kicks the Sailors out.*

Free. Nay, let the poor rogues have their forecastle jests; they cannot help 'em in a fight, scarce when a ship's sinking.

Man. Damn their untimely jests; a servant's jest is more sauciness than his counsel.

Free. But what! will you see nobody? not your friends?

Man. Friends!—— I have but one, and he, I hear, is not in town; nay, can have but one friend; for a true heart admits but of one friendship, as of one love. But in having that friend, I have a thousand; for he has the courage of men in despair, yet the diffidency and caution of cowards; the secrecy of the revengeful, and the constancy of martyrs; one fit to advise, to keep a secret, to fight and die for his friend. Such I think him; for I have trusted him with my mistress in my absence; and the trust of beauty is, sure, the greatest we can shew.

Free. Well, but all your good thoughts are not for him alone, I hope? Pray, what d'ye think of me for a friend?

Man. Of thee! Why, thou art a latitudinarian in friendship, that is, no friend; thou dost side with all mankind, but wilt suffer for none. Thou art, indeed, like your Lord Plausible,—the pink of courtesy, therefore hast no friendship; for ceremony and great professing renders friendship as much suspected as it does religion.

Free. And no professing, no ceremony at all in friendship, were as unnatural and as indecent as in religion; and there is hardly such a thing as an honest hypocrite, who professes himself to be worse than he is, unless it be yourself; for, though I could never get you to say you were my friend, I know you'll prove so.

Man. I must confess, I am so much your friend, I would not deceive you; therefore must tell you, (not only because my heart is taken up, but according to your rules of friendship,) I cannot be your friend.

Free. Why, pray?

Man. Because he that is, you'll say, a true friend to a man, is a friend to all his friends: but you must pardon me: I cannot wish well to pimps, flatterers, detractors, and cowards, stiff-nodding knaves, and supple, pliant, kissing fools: now, all these I have seen you use like the dearest friends in the world.

Free. Ha, ha, ha!———What, you observ'd me, I warrant, in the galleries at Whitehall, doing the business of the place! Pshaw! court professions, like court promises, go for nothing, man! but, faith, could you think I was a friend to all those I hugg'd, kiss'd, flatter'd, bow'd to? ha, ha!—

Man. You told 'em so, and swore it too; I heard you.

Free. Ay, but when their backs were turn'd, did I not tell you they were rogues, villains, rascals, whom I despis'd and hated?

Man. Very fine! But what reason had I to believe you spoke your heart to me, since you profess'd deceiving so many?

Free. Why, don't you know, good captain, that telling truth is a quality as prejudicial to a man that would thrive in the world, as square play to a cheat, or true love to a whore? Would you have a man speak truth to his ruin? You are severer than the law, which requires no man to swear against himself: You would have me

speak truth against myself, I warrant, and tell my promising friend, the courtier, he has a bad memory?

Man. Yes.

Free. And so make him remember to forget my business. And I should tell the great lawyer, too, that he takes oftener fees to hold his tongue than to speak?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. Ay, and have him hang or ruin me, when he should come to be a judge, and I before him. And you would have me tell the new officer, who bought his employment lately, that he is a coward?

Man. Ay.

Free. And so get myself cashier'd, not him, he having the better friends, though I the better sword. And I should tell the scribbler of honour, that heraldry were a prettier and fitter study for so fine a gentleman than poetry?

Man. Certainly.

Free. And so find myself mauled in his next lampoon. And you would have me tell the holy lady, too, she lies with her chaplain?

Man. No doubt on't.

Free. And so draw the clergy upon my back, and want a good table to dine at sometimes. And by the same reason, too, I should tell you that the world thinks you a madman, a brutal, and have you cut my throat, or, worse, hate me? What other good success of all my plain dealing could I have, than what I've mentioned?

Man. Why, first, your promising courtier would keep his word, out of fear of more reproaches; or, at least, would give you no more vain hopes: your lawyer would serve you more faithfully; for he, having no honour but his interest, is truest still to him he knows suspects him: the new officer would provoke thee to make him a coward, and so be cashiered, that thou, or some other honest fellow, who had more courage than money, might get his place: the noble sonneteer would trouble thee no more with his madrigals: the praying lady would leave off railing at wenching before thee, and not turn away her chamber-maid, for her own known frailty with thee: and I, instead of hating thee, should love thee, for thy plain dealing, and, in lieu of being mortified, am proud that the world and I think not well of one another.

Free. Well, doctors differ. You are for plain dealing, I find; but against your particular notions, I have the practice of the whole world.—Observe but, any morning, what people do, when they get together on the Exchange, in Westminster-hall, or the galleries in Whitehall.

Man. I must confess, there they seem to rehearse Bayes's grand dance:—here you see a bishop bowing low to a gaudy atheist; a judge to a doorkeeper; a great lord to a fishmonger or a scrivener, with a jack-chain about his neck; a lawyer to a serjeant-at-arms; a velvet physician to a threadbare chymist; and a supple gentleman-usher to a surly beef-eater; and so tread round in a preposterous huddle of ceremony to each other, whilst they can hardly hold their solemn false countenances.

Free. Well, they understand the world.

Man. Which I do not, I confess.

Free. But, sir, pray believe the friendship I promise you real, whatsoever I have profess'd to others: try me at least.

Man. Why, what would you do for me?

Free. I would fight for you.

Man. That you would do for your own honour,—but what else?

Free. I would lend you money, if I had it.

Man. To borrow more of me another time. That were but putting your money to interest: an usurer would be as good a friend. But what other piece of friendship?

Free. I would speak well of you to your enemies.

Man. To encourage others to be your friends, by a shew of gratitude—but what else?

Free. Nay, I would not hear you ill spoken of behind your back, by my friend.

Man. Nay, then thou'rt a friend indeed; but it were unreasonable to expect it from thee, as the world goes now, when new friends, like new mistresses, are got by disparaging old ones.

Enter FIDELIA.

But here comes another, will say as much, at least.—Dost not thou love me, devilishly too, my little volunteer, as well as he or any man can?

Fid. Better than any man can love you, my dear captain.

Man. Look you there; I told you so.

Fid. As well as you do truth or honour, sir; as well.

Man. Nay, good young gentleman, enough:—For shame: thou hast been a page, by thy flattering and lying, to one of those praying ladies who love flattery so well, they are jealous of it, and wert turn'd away for saying the same things to the old house-keeper, for sweet-meats, as you did to your lady; for thou flatterest every thing and every body alike.

Fid. You, dear sir, should not suspect the truth of what I say of you, though to you: Fame, the old liar, is believ'd when she speaks wonders of you: you cannot be flattered, sir; your merit is unspeakable.

Man. Hold, hold, sir, or I shall suspect worse of you,—that you have been a cushion-bearer to some state hypocrite, and turn'd away by the chaplains, for out-flattering their probation-sermons for a benefice.

Fid. Suspect me for any thing, sir, but the want of love, faith, and duty to you, the bravest, worthiest of mankind: believe me, I could die for you, sir.

Man. Nay, there you lie, sir:—Did I not see thee more afraid in the fight than the chaplain of the ship, or the purser, that bought his place?

Fid. Can he be said to be afraid that ventures to sea with you?

Man. Fie, fie, no more; I shall hate thy flattery worse than thy cowardice, nay, than thy bragging.

Fid. Well, I own, then, I was afraid, mightily afraid; yet for you I would be afraid again, an hundred times afraid: dying is ceasing to be afraid, and that I could do, sure, for you, and you'll believe me one day. [*Weeps.*

Free. Poor youth! believe his eyes, if not his tongue: he seems to speak truth with them.

Man. What! does he cry? A pox on't! a maudlin flatterer is as nauseously troublesome as a maudlin drunkard. No more, you little milksop; do not cry; I'll never make thee afraid again; for of all men, if I had occasion, thou shouldst not be my second; and, when I go to sea again, thou shalt venture thy life no more with me.

Fid. Why, will you leave me behind then?—— If you would preserve my life, I'm sure you should not. [*Aside.*

Man. Leave thee behind! Ay, ay, thou art a hopeful youth for the shore only: here thou wilt live to be cherish'd by fortune and the great ones; for thou may'st easily come to out-flatter a dull poet, out-lie a coffee-house or gazette-writer, out-swear a knight of the post, out-watch a pimp, out-fawn a rook, out-promise a lover, out-rail a wit, and out-brag a sea captain: All this thou canst do, because thou'rt a coward, a thing I hate; therefore thou'lt do better with the world than with me; and these are the good courses you must take in the world. There's good advice, at least, at parting: go, and be happy with't.

Fid. Parting, sir! O! let me not hear that dismal word.

Man. If my words frighten thee, be gone the sooner; for, to be plain with thee, cowardice and I cannot dwell together.

Fid. And cruelty and courage never dwell together, sure, sir. Do not turn me off to shame and misery; for I am helpless and friendless.

Man. Friendless! there are half a score friends for thee then; [*Offers her gold*] I leave myself no more; they'll help thee a little. Be gone; go; I must be cruel to thee, (if thou call'st it so,) out of pity.

Fid. If you would be cruelly pitiful, sir, let it be with your sword, and not gold. [*Exit.*

Enter First Sailor.

1*st Sail.* We have, with much ado, turn'd away two gentlemen, who told us, forty times over, their names were Mr Novel and Major Oldfox.

Man. Well, to your post again. [*Exit Sailor.*] But how come those puppies coupled always together?

Free. O, the coxcombs keep each other company, to shew each other, as Novel calls it; or, as Oldfox says, like two knives, to whet one another.

Man. And set other people's teeth an edge.

Enter Second Sailor.

2 *Sail.* Here is a woman, an't like your honour, scolds and bustles with us, to come in, as much as a seaman's widow at the Navy-Office: her name is Mrs Blackacre.

Man. That fiend, too!

Free. The widow Blackacre, is it not? that litigious she petty-fogger, who is at law and difference with all the world; but I wish I could make her agree with me in the church: they say she has fifteen hundred pounds a-year jointure, and the care of her son, that is, the destruction of his estate.

Man. Her lawyers, attorneys, and solicitors have fifteen hundred pound a-year, whilst she is contented to be poor, to make other people so; for she is as vexatious as her father was, the great attorney, nay, as a dozen Norfolk attorneys, and as implacable an adversary, as a wife suing for alimony, or a parson for his tithes; and she loves an Easter-term, or any term, not, as other country ladies do, to come up to be fine, cuckold their husbands, and take their pleasure; for she has no pleasure but in vexing others, and is usually cloth'd and daggled like a bawd in disguise, pursued through alleys by serjeants. When she is in town, she lodges in one of the inns of Chancery, where she breeds her son, and is herself his tutoress in law French; and for her country abode, though she has no estate there, she chuses Norfolk. But bid her come in, with a pox to her: she is Olivia's kinswoman, and may make me amends for her visit, by some discourse of that dear woman. [*Exit Sailor.*

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, *with a mantle, and a green bag and several papers in the other hand;* JERRY BLACKACRE, *her son, in a gown, laden with green bags, following her.*

Wid. I never had so much to do with a judge's door-keeper as with yours; but——

Man. But the incomparable Olivia, how does she since I went?

Wid. Since you went, my suit——

Man. Olivia, I say, is she well?

Wid. My suit, if you had not returned——

Man. Damn your suit!—How does your cousin Olivia?

Wid. My suit, I say, had been quite lost; but now——

Man. But now where is Olivia? in town? for——

Wid. For to-morrow we are to have a hearing.

Man. Would you'd let me have a hearing to-day.

Wid. But why won't you hear me?

Man. I am no judge, and you talk of nothing but suits; but, pray tell me, when did you see Olivia?

Wid. I am no visitor, but a woman of business; or if I ever visit, 'tis only the Chancery-Lane ladies,—ladies towards the law, and not any of your lazy, good-for-nothing flirts, who cannot read law French, though a gallant writ it. But, as I was telling you, my suit——

Man. Damn these impertinent, vexatious people of business, of all sexes; they are still troubling the world with the tedious recitals of their law-suits; and one can no more stop their mouths, than a wit's, when he talks of himself, or an intelligencer's, when he talks of other people.

Wid. And a pox of all vexatious, impertinent

lovers; they are still perplexing the world with the tedious narrations of their love suits, and discourses of their mistresses: you are as troublesome to a poor widow of business, as a young, coxcomb, rhyming lover.

Man. And thou art as troublesome to me as a rook to a losing gamester, or a young putter of cases to his mistress and semptress, who has love in her head for another.

Wid. Nay, since you talk of putting of cases, and will not hear me speak, hear our Jerry a little; let him put our case to you, for the trial's to-morrow; and since you are my chief witness, I would have your memory refresh'd, and your judgment inform'd, that you may not give your evidence improperly. Speak out, child.

Jer. Yes, forsooth. Hem! Hem! John-a-Stiles——

Man. You may talk, young lawyer, but I shall no more mind you, than a hungry judge does a cause after the clock has struck one.

Free. Nay, you'll find him as peevish too.

Wid. No matter. Jerry, go on. Do you observe it then, sir; for I think I have seen you in a gown once. Lord, I could hear our Jerry put cases all day long! Mark him, sir.

Jer. John-a-Stiles——No——There are, first, Fitz, Pere, and Ayle——No, no; Ayle, Pere, and Fitz: Ayle is seized in fee of Blackacre; John-a-Stiles disseises Ayle; Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dies; then the Ayle——No, the Fitz.

Wid. No, the Pere, sirrah.

Jer. O, the Pere; ay, the Pere, sir, and the Fitz——No, the Ayle; no, the Pere and the Fitz, sir, and——

Man. Damn Pere, Mere, and Fitz, sir.

Wid. No, you are out, child.—Hear me, captain, then.—There are Ayle, Pere, and Fitz: Ayle is seized in fee of Blackacre; and being so seized, John-a-Stiles disseises the Ayle; Ayle makes claim, and the disseisor dies; and then the Pere re-enters—the Pere, sirrah, the Pere—[*To* JERRY] and the Fitz enters upon the Pere; and the Ayle brings his writ of disseizen in the Post; and the Pere brings his writ of disseizen in the Pere; and—

Man. Canst thou bear this stuff, Freeman? I could as soon suffer a whole noise of flatterers, at a great man's levee in the morning; but thou hast servile complacency enough to listen to a quibbling statesman in disgrace, nay, and be before-hand with him, in laughing at his dull nojest; but I—— [*Offering to go out.*

Wid. Nay, sir, hold. Where's the subpœna, Jerry? I must serve you, sir. You are requir'd, by this, to give your testimony——

Man. I'll be foresworn to be reveng'd on thee. [*Exit* MANLEY, *throwing away the subpœna.*

Wid. Get you gone, for a lawless companion! Come, Jerry, I had almost forgot we were to meet at the master's at three: let us mind our business still, child.

Jer. Ay, forsooth, e'en so let's.

Free. Nay, madam, now I would beg you to hear me a little, a little of my business.

Wid. I have business of my own calls me away, sir.

Free. My business would prove yours too, dear madam.

Wid. Yours would be some sweet business, I warrant:—What, 'tis no Westminster-hall business? Would you have my advice?

Free. No, faith; 'tis a little Westminster-abbey business:—I would have your consent.

Wid. O fie, fie, sir; to me such discourse, before my dear minor there!

Jer. Ay, ay, mother, he would be taking livery and seizen of your jointure, by digging the turf; but I'll watch your waters, bully, i'fack. Come away, mother.

[*Exit* JERRY, *hauling away his mother.*

Manet FREEMAN: *Enter to him* FIDELIA.

Fid. Dear sir, you have pity; beget but some in your captain for me.

Free. Where is he?

Fid. Within; swearing as much as he did in the great storm, and cursing you, and sometimes sinks into calms and sighs, and talks of his Olivia.

Free. He would never trust me to see her: is she handsome?

Fid. No, if you'll take my word; but I am not a proper judge.

Free. What is she?

Fid. A gentlewoman, I suppose, but of as mean a fortune as beauty; but her relations would not suffer her to go with him to the Indies: and his aversion to this side of the world, together with the late opportunity of commanding the convoy, would not let him stay here longer, though to enjoy her.

Free. He loves her mightily then.

Fid. Yes, so well, that the remainder of his fortune (I hear, about five or six thousand pounds) he has left her, in case he had died by the way, or before she could prevail with her friends to follow him, which he expected she should do; and has left behind him his great bosom-friend, to be her convoy to him.

Free. What charms has she for him, if she be not handsome?

Fid. He fancies her, I suppose, the only woman of truth and sincerity in the world.

Free. No common beauty, I confess.

Fid. Or else, sure, he would not have trusted her with so great a share of his fortune in his absence; I suppose, (since his late loss,) all he has.

Free. Why, has he left it in her own custody?

Fid. I am told so.

Free. Then he has shewed love to her indeed, in leaving her like an old husband, that dies as soon as he has made his wife a good jointure: but I'll go in to him, and speak for you, and know more from him of his Olivia. [*Exit.*

Manet FIDELIA, *sola.*

Fid. His Olivia, indeed, his happy Olivia;
Yet she was left behind, when I was with him;
But she was ne'er out of his mind or heart.
She has told him she lov'd him; I have shew'd it,

And durst not tell him so, till I had done,
Under this habit, such convincing acts
Of loving friendship for him, that, through it,
He first might find out both my sex and love;
And, when I'd have him from his fair Olivia,
And this bright world of artful beauties here,
Might then have hop'd he would have look'd on me,
Amongst the sooty Indians: and I could
To choose there live his wife, where wives are forc'd
To live no longer when their husbands die,
Nay, what's yet worse, to share 'em, whilst they live,
With many rival wives. But here he comes,
And I must yet keep out of his sight, not
To lose it for ever. [*Exit.*

Enter MANLY *and* FREEMAN.

Free. But what strange charms has she, that could make you love?

Man. Strange charms indeed! She has beauty enough to call in question her wit or virtue, and her form would make a starved hermit a ravisher, yet her virtue and conduct would preserve her from the subtle lust of a pampered prelate. She is so perfect a beauty, that art could not better it, nor affectation deform it; yet all this is nothing. Her tongue, as well as face, ne'er knew artifice; nor ever did her words or looks contradict her heart: She is all truth, and hates the lying, masking, daubing world, as I do; for which I love her, and for which I think she dislikes not me; for she has often shut out of her conversation, for mine, the gaudy, fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only, and refused their common-place, pert chat, flattery, and submissions, to be entertained with my sullen bluntness and honest love; and, last of all, swore to me, since her parents would not suffer her to go with me, she would stay behind for no other man, but follow me, without their leave, if not to be obtained: Which oath—

Free. Did you think she would keep?

Man. Yes; for she is not, I tell you, like other women, but can keep her promise, though she has sworn to keep it; but, that she might the better keep it, I left her the value of five or six thousand pounds; for women's wants are generally their most importunate solicitors to love or marriage.

Free. And money summons lovers, more than beauty, and augments but their importunity and their number, so makes it the harder for a woman to deny 'em. For my part, I am for the French maxim; if you would have your female subjects loyal, keep 'em poor; but, in short, that your mistress may not marry, you have given her a portion.

Man. She had given me her heart first, and I am satisfied with the security: I can never doubt her truth and constancy.

Free. It seems you do, since you are fain to bribe it with money. But how come you to be so diffident of the man that says he loves you, and not doubt the woman that says it?

Man. I should, I confess, doubt the love of any other woman but her, as I do the friendship of any other man but him I have trusted; but I have such proofs of their faith as cannot deceive me.

Free. Cannot!

Man. Not but I know, that, generally, no man can be a great enemy but under the name of friend; and if you are a cuckold, it is your friend only that makes you so; for your enemy is not admitted to your house: if you are cheated in your fortune, 'tis your friend that does it; for your enemy is not made your trustee: if your honour or good name be injured, 'tis your friend that does it still, because your enemy is not believed against you: therefore, I rather chuse to go where honest, downright barbarity is profess'd, where men devour one another like generous, hungry lions and tigers, not like crocodiles; where they think the devil white, of our complexion, and I am already so far an Indian: but if your weak faith doubts this miracle of a woman, come along with me, and believe, and thou wilt find her so handsome, that thou, who art so much my friend, wilt have a mind to lie with her, and so wilt not fail to discover what her faith and thine is to me.

When we're in love, the great adversity,
Our friends and mistresses at once we try.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—OLIVIA'S *Lodgings.*

Enter OLIVIA, ELIZA, LETTICE.

Oliv. Ah, cousin, what a world 'tis we live in! I am so weary of it.

Eliz. Truly, cousin, I can find no fault with it, but that we cannot always live in't; for I can never be weary of it.

Oliv. O, hideous! you cannot be in earnest, sure, when you say you like the filthy world.

Eliz. You cannot be in earnest, sure, when you say you dislike it.

Oliv. You are a very censorious creature, I find.

Eliz. I must confess, I think we women as often discover where we love by railing, as men when they lie, by their swearing; and the world is but a constant keeping gallant, whom we fail not to quarrel with, when any thing crosses us, yet cannot part with't for our hearts.

Let. A gallant, indeed, madam, whom ladies first make jealous, and then quarrel with it for being so; for if, by her discretion, a lady be talked of for a man, she cries presently, 'Tis a censorious world; if, by her vanity, the intrigue be found out, 'Tis a prying, malicious world; and if, by her

over-fondness, the gallant proves inconstant, 'Tis a false world; and if, by her niggardliness, the chamber-maid tells, 'Tis a perfidious world: but that, I'm sure, your ladyship cannot say of the world yet, as bad as 'tis.

Oliv. But I may say, 'Tis a very impertinent world.—Hold your peace. And, cousin, if the world be a gallant, 'tis such an one as is my aversion; pray name it no more.

Eliz. But is it possible the world, which has such variety of charms for other women, can have none for you? Let's see——first, what d'ye think of dressing and fine clothes?

Oliv. Dressing! Fie, fie, 'tis my aversion. But come hither, you dowdy; methinks you might have opened this toure better. O, hideous! I cannot suffer it? D'ye see how't sits?

Eliz. Well enough, cousin, if dressing be your aversion.

Oliv. 'Tis so: and for variety of rich clothes, they are more my aversion.

Let. Ay, 'tis because your ladyship wears 'em too long; for indeed a gown, like a gallant, grows one's aversion by having too much of it.

Oliv. Insatiable creature! I'll be sworn I have had this not above three days, cousin, and within this month have made some six more.

Eliz. Then your aversion to 'em is not altogether so great.

Oliv. Alas! 'tis for my woman only I wear 'em, cousin.

Let. If it be for me only, madam, pray do not wear 'em.

Eliz. But what d'ye think of visits—balls—

Oliv. O, I detest 'em.

Eliz. Of plays?

Oliv. I abominate 'em: filthy, obscene, hideous things.

Eliz. What say you to masquerading in the winter, and Hyde Park in the summer?

Oliv. Insipid pleasures I taste not.

Eliz. Nay, if you are for more solid pleasures, what think you of a rich young husband?

Oliv. O, horrid! Marriage! What a pleasure you have found out! I nauseate it of all things.

Let. But what does your ladyship think then of a liberal, handsome, young lover?

Oliv. A handsome, young fellow, you impudent! Be gone out of my sight. Name a handsome young fellow to me! Foh! a hideous, handsome, young fellow I abominate. [*Spits.*

Eliz. Indeed! But let's see——will nothing please you? What d'ye think of the court?

Oliv. How? the court! the court, cousin! my aversion, my aversion, my aversion of all aversions.

Eliz. How? the court! where——

Oliv. Where sincerity is a quality as out of fashion and as unprosperous as bashfulness. I could not laugh at a quibble, though it were a fat privy-counsellor's, nor praise a lord's ill verses, though I were myself the subject, nor an old lady's young looks, though I were her woman, nor sit to a vain young simile-maker, though he flattered me; in short, I could not glote upon a man when he comes into a room, and laugh at him when he goes out; I cannot rail at the absent, to flatter the standers-by; I——

Eliz. Well, but railing now is so common, that 'tis no more malice, but the fashion; and the absent think they are no more the worse for being rail'd at, than the present think they're the better for being flattered: and for the court——

Oliv. Nay, do not defend the court; for you'll make me rail at it, like a trusting citizen's widow.

Eliz. Or like a Holborn lady, who could not get into the last ball, or was out of countenance in the drawing-room, the last Sunday of her appearance there; for none rail at the court but those who cannot get into it, or else who are ridiculous when they are there; and I shall suspect you were laughed at when you were last there, or would be a maid of honour.

Oliv. I a maid of honour! To be a maid of honour were yet of all things my aversion.

Eliz. In what sense am I to understand you? But, in fine, by the word aversion, I'm sure you dissemble; for I never knew woman yet that us'd it who did not. Come, our tongues belie our hearts, more than our pocket-glasses do our faces: But methinks we ought to leave off dissembling, since 'tis grown of no use to us; for all wise observers understand us now-a-days, as they do dreams, almanacks, and Dutch gazettes, by the contrary: And a man no more believes a woman, when she says she has an aversion for him, than when she says she'll cry out.

Oliv. O, filthy, hideous! Peace, cousin, or your discourse will be my aversion; and you may believe me.

Eliz. Yes; for if any thing be a woman's aversion, 'tis plain dealing from another woman: and perhaps that's your quarrel to the world; for that will talk, as your woman says.

Oliv. Talk? not of me, sure; for what men do I converse with? what visits do I admit?

Enter Boy.

Boy. Here's the gentleman to wait upon you, madam.

Oliv. On me! You little, unthinking fop, d'ye know what you say?

Boy. Yes, madam, 'tis the gentleman that comes every day to you, who—

Oliv. Hold your peace, you heedless little animal, and get you gone. This country boy, cousin, takes my dancing-master, tailor, or the spruce milliner, for visitors. [*Exit Boy.*

Let. No, madam, 'tis Mr Novel, I'm sure, by his talking so loud: I know his voice too, madam.

Oliv. You know nothing, you buffle-headed, stupid creature you; you would make my cousin believe I receive visits. But if it be Mr——what did you call him?

Let. Mr Novel, madam, he that——

Oliv. Hold your peace; I'll hear no more of him; but if it be your Mr——(I cann't think of his name again,) I suppose he has followed my cousin hither.

Eliz. No, cousin, I will not rob you of the honour of the visit: 'tis to you, cousin, for I know him not.

Oliv. Nor did I ever hear of him before, upon my honour, cousin: besides, ha'n't I told you, that visits, and the business of visits, flattery and detraction, are my aversion? D'ye think then I would admit such a coxcomb as he is? who, rather than not rail, will rail at the dead, whom none speak ill of; and rather than not flatter, will flatter the poets of the age, whom none will flatter; who affects novelty as much as the fashion, and is as fantastical as changeable, and as well known as the fashion; who likes nothing but what is new; nay, would chuse to have his friend or his title a new one: in fine, he is my aversion.

Eliz. I find you do know him, cousin, at least, have heard of him.

Oliv. Yes, now I remember, I have heard of him.

Eliz. Well; but since he is such a coxcomb, for heaven's sake, let him not come up; tell him, Mrs Lettice, your lady is not within.

Oliv. No, Lettice, tell him my cousin is here, and that he may come up; for, notwithstanding I detest the sight of him, you may like his conversation; and though I would use him scurvily, I will not be rude to you in my own lodging; since he has follow'd you hither, let him come up, I say.

Eliz. Very fine! Pray let him go to the devil, I say, for me: I know him not, nor desire it. Send him away, Mrs Lettice.

Oliv. Upon my word, she sha'n't: I must disobey your commands, to comply with your desires. Call him up, Lettice.

Eliz. Nay, I'll swear she shall not stir on that errand. [*Holds* LETTICE.

Oliv. Well, then, I'll call him myself for you, since you will have it so. Mr Novel. [*Calls out at the door.*] Sir, sir.

Enter NOVEL.

Nov. Madam, I beg your pardon: perhaps you were busy: I did not think you had company with you.

Eliz. Yet he comes to me, cousin! [*Aside.*

Oliv. Chairs there. [*They sit.*

Nov. Well, but, madam, d'ye know whence I come now?

Oliv. From some melancholy place I warrant, sir, since they have lost your good company.

Eliz. So.

Nov. From a place where they have treated me, at dinner, with so much civility and kindness, a pox on 'em! that I could hardly get away to you, dear madam.

Oliv. You have a way with you so new and obliging, sir.

Eliz. You hate flattery, cousin! [*Apart to* OLIVIA.

Nov. Nay, faith, madam, d'ye think my way new? Then you are obliging, madam. I must confess, I hate imitation, to do any thing like other people. All that know me do me the honour to say, I am an original, faith: but as I was saying, madam, I have been treated to-day with all the ceremony and kindness imaginable, at my lady Autumn's; but the nauseous old woman at the upper end of her table——

Oliv. Revives the old Grecian custom, of serving in a Death's head with their banquets.

Nov. Ha! ha! fine, just, i'faith, nay, and new: 'tis like eating with the ghost in the Libertine: she would frighten a man from her dinner with her hollow invitation, and spoil one's stomach——

Oliv. To meat or women. I detest her hollow cherry cheeks; she looks like an old coach new painted; affecting an unseemly smugness, whilst she is ready to drop in pieces.

Eliz. You hate detraction I see, cousin! [*Apart to* OLIVIA.

Nov. But the silly old fury, whilst she affects to look like a woman of this age, talks——

Oliv. Like one of the last, and as passionately as an old courtier, who has out-liv'd his office.

Nov. Yes, madam: but pray let me give you her character. Then she never counts her age by the years, but——

Oliv. By the masques she has liv'd to see.

Nov. Nay, then, madam, I see you think a little harmless railing too great a pleasure for any but yourself, and therefore I've done.

Oliv. Nay, faith, you shall tell me who you had there at dinner.

Nov. If you would hear me, madam.

Oliv. Most patiently: Speak, sir.

Nov. Then, we had her daughter——

Oliv. Ay, her daughter, the very disgrace to good clothes, which she always wears, but to heighten her deformity, not mend it; for she is still most splendidly, gallantly ugly, and looks like an ill piece of daubing in a rich frame.

Nov. So! But have you done with her, madam, and can you spare her to me a little now?

Oliv. Ay, ay, sir.

Nov. Then, she is like——

Oliv. She is, you'd say, like a city bride, the greater fortune, but not the greater beauty for her dress.

Nov. Well: yet have you done, madam? Then she——

Oliv. Then she bestows as unfortunately on her face all the graces in fashion, as the languishing eye, the hanging or pouting lip; but as the fool is never more provoking than when he aims at wit, the ill-favour'd of our sex are never more nauseous than when they would be beauties, adding to their natural deformity the artificial ugliness of affectation.

Eliz. So, cousin, I find one may have a collection of all one's acquaintances pictures as well at your house as at Mr Lely's; only, the difference is, there we find 'em much handsomer than they are, and like; here much uglier, and like: and you are the first of the profession of picture-drawing I ever knew without flattery.

Oliv. I draw after the life; do nobody wrong, cousin.

Eliz. No, you hate flattery and detraction!

Oliv. But, Mr Novel, who had you besides at dinner?

Nov. Nay, the devil take me if I tell you, un-

less you will allow me the privilege of railing in my turn; but, now I think on't, the women ought to be your province, as the men are mine: and you must know we had him whom——

Oliv. Him whom——

Nov. What! invading me already? and giving the character, before you know the man?

Eliz. No, that is not fair, though it be usual.

Oliv. I beg your pardon, Mr Novel; pray go on.

Nov. Then, I say, we had that familiar coxcomb who is at home wheresoe'er he comes.

Oliv. Ay, that fool——

Nov. Nay, then, madam, your servant: I'm gone. Taking a fool out of one's mouth is worse than taking the bread out of one's mouth.

Oliv. I've done: Your pardon, Mr Novel; pray proceed.

Nov. I say, the rogue, that he may be the only wit in company, will let nobody else talk, and—

Oliv. Ay, those fops who love to talk all themselves are of all things my aversion.

Nov. Then you'll let me speak, madam, sure. The rogue, I say, will force his jest upon you; and I hate a jest that's forc'd upon a man, as much as a glass.

Eliz. Why, I hope, sir, he does not expect a man of your temperance in jesting should do him reason?

Nov. What, interruption from this side too! I must then——

[*Offers to rise;* OLIVIA *holds him.*

Oliv. No, sir.——You must know, cousin, that fop he means, though he talks only to be commended, will not give you leave to do't.

Nov. But, madam——

Oliv. He a wit! Hang him, he's only an adopter of straggling jests and fatherless lampoons, by the credit of which he eats at good tables, and so, like the barren beggar-woman, lives by borrow'd children.

Nov. Madam——

Oliv. And never was author of any thing but his news; but that is still all his own.

Nov. Madam, pray——

Oliv. An eternal babbler, and makes no more use of his ears than a man that sits at a play by his mistress, or in fop-corner: he's, in fine, a base, detracting fellow, and is my aversion. But who else, pr'ythee, Mr Novel, was there with you?—Nay, you sha'n't stir.

Nov. I beg your pardon, madam; I cannot stay in any place where I'm not allow'd a little Christian liberty of railing.

Oliv. Nay, pr'ythee, Mr Novel, stay; and tho' you should rail at me, I would hear you with patience. Pr'ythee, who else was there with you?

Nov. Your servant, madam.

Oliv. Nay, pr'ythee tell us, Mr Novel, pr'ythee do.

Nov. We had nobody else.

Oliv. Nay, faith, I know you had. Come, my lord Plausible was there too, who is, cousin, a——

Eliz. You need not tell me what he is, cousin; for I know him to be a civil, good-natured, harmless gentleman, that speaks well of all the world, and is always in good humour, and——

Oliv. Hold, cousin, hold; I hate detraction: but I must tell you, cousin, his civility is cowardice, his good nature want of wit; and he has neither courage nor sense to rail: And for his being always in humour, 'tis because he is never dissatisfy'd with himself: In fine, he is my aversion; and I never admit his visits beyond my hall.

Nov. No, he visit you! Damn him, cringing, grinning rogue; if I should see him coming up to you, I would make bold to kick him down again. Ha!——

Enter my Lord PLAUSIBLE.

My dear lord, your most humble servant.

[*Rises and salutes* PLAUSIBLE, *and kisses him.*

Eliz. So I find kissing and railing succeed each other with the angry men as well as with the angry women; and their quarrels are like love-quarrels, since absence is the only cause of them; for as soon as the man appears again, they are over. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. Your most faithful, humble servant, generous Mr Novel; and, madam, I am your eternal slave, and kiss your fair hands, which I had done sooner, according to your commands, but—

Oliv. No excuses, my lord.

Eliz. What! you sent for him then, cousin? [*Apart.*

Nov. Ha! invited! [*Aside.*

Oliv. I know you must divide yourself; for your good company is too general a good to be engross'd by any particular friend.

L. Plau. O Lord, madam, my company! Your most obliged, faithful, humble servant: but I could have brought you good company indeed, for I parted at your door with two of the worthiest, bravest men——

Oliv. Who were they, my lord?

Nov. Who do you call the worthiest, bravest men, pray?

L. Plau. O, the wisest, bravest gentlemen! men of such honour and virtue! of such good qualities! ah——

Eliz. This is a coxcomb that speaks ill of all people a different way, and libels every body with dull praise, and commonly in the wrong place, so makes his panegyrics abusive lampoons. [*Aside.*

Oliv. But pray let me know who they were.

L. Plau. Ah! such patterns of heroic virtue! such——

Nov. Well, but who the devil were they?

L. Plau. The honour of our nation, the glory of our age: Ah! I could dwell a twelvemonth on their praise, which, indeed, I might spare, by telling their names:—Sir John Current and Sir Richard Court-title.

Nov. Court-title! Ha, ha!

Oliv. And Sir John Current! Why will you keep such a wretch company, my lord?

L. Plau. Oh, madam, seriously, you are a little too severe, for he is a man of unquestion'd reputation in every thing.

Oliv. Yes, because he endeavours only with the women to pass for a man of courage, and with the bullies for a wit; with the wits for a man of business, and with the men of business for a favourite at court; and at court for good city security.

Nov. And for Sir Richard, he——

L. Plau. He loves your choice, pick'd company; persons that——

Oliv. He loves a lord indeed; but——

Nov. Pray, dear madam, let me have but a bold stroke or two at his picture. He loves a lord, as you say, though——

Oliv. Though he borrow'd his money, and ne'er paid him again.

Nov. And would bespeak a place three days before, at the back-end of a lord's coach, to Hyde Park.

L. Plau. Nay, i'faith, i'faith, you are both too severe.

Oliv. Then, to shew yet more his passion for quality, he makes love to that fulsome coach-load of honour, my lady Goodly; for he is always at her lodging.

L. Plau. Because it is the conventicle-gallant, the meeting-house of all the fair ladies and glorious superfine beauties of the town.

Nov. Very fine ladies! There's, first——

Oliv. Her honour, as fat as an hostess.

L. Plau. She is something plump indeed; a goodly, comely, graceful person.

Nov. Then there's my lady Frances—what d'ye call her? Ugly——

Oliv. As a citizen's lawfully-begotten daughter.

L. Plau. She has wit in abundance, and the handsomest heel, elbow, and tip of an ear, you ever saw.

Nov. Heel and elbow! Ha, ha!—And there's my lady Betty, you know——

Oliv. As sluttish and slatternly as an Irish woman bred in France.

L. Plau. Ah! all she has hangs with a loose air indeed, and becoming negligence.

Eliz. You see all faults with lover's eyes, I find, my lord.

L. Plau. Ah, madam, your most obliged, faithful, humble servant to command! But you can say nothing, sure, against the superfine Mrs——

Oliv. I know who you mean. She is as censorious and detracting a jade as a superannuated sinner.

L. Plau. She has a smart way of raillery, 'tis confess'd.

Nov. And then, for Mrs Grideline——

L. Plau. She, I'm sure is——

Oliv. One that never spoke ill of any body, 'tis confess'd; for she is as silent in conversation as a country-lover, and no better company than a clock or a weather-glass; for if she sounds, 'tis but once an hour, to put you in mind of the time of day, or tell you 'twill be cold or hot, rain or snow.

L. Plau. Ah, poor creature! she's extremely good and modest.

Nov. And for Mrs Bridlechin, she——

Oliv. As proud as a churchman's wife.

L. Plau. She's a woman of great spirit and honour, and will not make herself cheap, 'tis true.

Nov. Then Mrs Hoyden, that calls all people by their sirnames, and is——

Oliv. As familiar a duck——

Nov. As an actress in the tyring-room. There I was once before-hand with you, madam.

L. Plau. Mrs Hoyden! a poor, affable, good-natur'd soul. But the divine Mrs Trifle comes thither too: sure, her beauty, virtue, and conduct, you can say nothing to?

Oliv. No!

Nov. No!——Pray let me speak, madam.

Oliv. First, can any one be call'd beautiful that squints?

L. Plau. Her eyes languish a little, I own.

Nov. Languish! ha, ha!

Oliv. Languish! Then, for her conduct:—she was seen at the Country Wife after the first day. There's for you, my lord.

L. Plau. But, madam, she was not seen to use her fan all the play long, turn aside her head, or, by a conscious blush, discover more guilt than modesty.

Oliv. Very fine! Then you think a woman modest that sees the hideous Country Wife without blushing, or publishing her detestation of it?—D'ye hear him, cousin?

Eliz. Yes, and am, I must confess, something of his opinion, and think, that as an over-captious fool at a play, by endeavouring to shew the author's want of wit, exposes his own to more censure, so may a lady call her own modesty in question by publicly cavilling with the poets; for all those grimaces of honour and artificial modesty disparage a woman's real virtue as much as the use of white and red does the natural complexion; and you must use very, very little, if you would have it thought your own.

Oliv. Then you would have a woman of honour, with passive looks, ears, and tongue, undergo all the hideous obscenity she hears at nasty plays?

Eliz. Truly, I think a woman betrays her want of modesty by shewing it publicly in a play-house, as much as a man does his want of courage by a quarrel there; for the truly modest and stout say least, and are least exceptious, especially in public.

Oliv. O, hideous! Cousin, this cannot be your opinion: but you are one of those who have the confidence to pardon the filthy play.

Eliz. Why, what is there of ill in't, say you?

Oliv. O fie, fie, fie, would you put me to the blush anew? call all the blood into my face again? But to satisfy you then:—First, the clandestine obscenity in the very name of Horner.

Eliz. Truly, 'tis so hidden, I cannot find it out, I confess.

Oliv. O, horrid! Does it not give you the rank conception or image of a goat, or town-bull, or a satyr; nay, what is yet a filthier image than all the rest, that of an eunuch?

Eliz. What then? I can think of a goat, a bull, or satyr, without any hurt.

Oliv. Ay, but, cousin, one cannot stop there.

Eliz. I can, cousin.

Oliv. O no; for when you have those filthy creatures in your head once, the next thing you think is what they do; as their defiling of honest men's beds and couches, rapes upon sleeping and waking country-virgins, under hedges and on hay-cocks; nay, further——

Eliz. Nay, no farther, cousin; we have enough of your comment on the play, which will make you more asham'd than the play itself.

Oliv. O, believe me, 'tis a filthy play; and you may take my word for a filthy play as soon as another's: but the filthiest thing in that play, or any other play, is——

Eliz. Pray keep it to yourself, if it be so.

Oliv. No, faith, you shall know it: I'm resolv'd to make you out of love with the play. I say, the lewdest, filthiest thing is his china; nay, I will never forget the beastly author his china: he has quite taken away the reputation of poor China itself, and sully'd the most innocent and pretty furniture of a lady's chamber; insomuch, that I was fain to break all my defil'd vessels. You see I have none left; nor you, I hope.

Eliz. You'll pardon me: I cannot think the worse of my china for that of the play-house.

Oliv. Why, you will not keep any now, sure! 'Tis now as unfit an ornament for a lady's chamber as the pictures that come from Italy and other hot countries, as appears by their nudities, which I always cover, or scratch out, wheresoe'er I find 'em. But china! out upon't: filthy china; nasty, debauch'd china!

Eliz. All this will not put me out of conceit with china, nor the play, which is acted to-day, or another of the same beastly author's, as you call him, which I'll go see.

Oliv. You will not, sure! nay, you shall not venture your reputation by going, and mine, by leaving me alone with two men here: nay, you'll disoblige me for ever, if—— [*pulls her back.*

Eliz. I stay!——Your servant. [*Exit* ELIZA.

Oliv. Well——But, my lord, though you justify every body, you cannot in earnest uphold so beastly a writer, whose ink is so smutty, as one may say.

L. Plau. Faith, I dare swear the poor man did not think to disoblige the ladies, by any amorous, soft, passionate, luscious saying in his play.

Oliv. Fie, my lord.—But what think you, Mr Novel, of the play? though I know you are a friend to all that are new.

Nov. Faith, madam, I must confess, the new plays would not be the worse for my advice, but I could never get the silly rogues the poets to mind what I say; but I'll tell you what counsel I gave the surly fool you spake of.

Oliv. What was't:

Nov. Faith, to put this play in rhyme; for rhyme, you know, often makes mystical nonsense pass with the critics for wit, and a double-meaning saying with the ladies for soft, tender, and moving passion. But now I talk of passion, I saw your old lover this morning——Captain—— [*Whispers.*

Enter Captain MANLY; FREEMAN *and* FIDELIA *standing behind.*

Oliv. Whom?——Nay, you need not whisper.

Man. We are luckily got hither unobserv'd.—How! in a close conversation with these supple rascals, the out-casts of sempstresses shops?

Free. Faith, pardon her, captain, that, since she could no longer be entertain'd with your manly bluntness and honest love, she takes up with the pert chat and common-place flattery of these fluttering parrots of the town, apes and echoes of men only.

Man. Do not you, sir, play the echo too,—mock me daily with my own words, and shew yourself as impertinent as they are.

Free. Nay, captain——

Fid. Nay, lieutenant, do not excuse her: Methinks she looks very kindly upon 'em both, and seems to be pleas'd with what that fool there says to her.

Man. You lie, sir, and hold your peace, that I may not be provok'd to give you a worse reply.

Oliv. Manly return'd, d'ye say! And is he safe? [*Whispers to* PLAUSIBLE.

Man. She yet seems concern'd for my safety, and, perhaps, they are admitted now here but for their news of me; for intelligence indeed is the common passport of nauseous fools, when they go their round of good tables and houses. [*Aside.*

Oliv. I heard of his fighting only, without particulars, and confess I always lov'd his brutal courage, because it made me hope it might rid me of his more brutal love.

Man. What's that? [*Apart.*

Oliv. But is he at last return'd, d'ye say, unhurt?

Nov. Ay, faith, without doing his business; for the rogue has been these two years pretending to a wooden leg, which he would take from Fortune as kindly as the staff of a marshall of France, and rather read his name in a gazette——

Oliv. Than in the entail of a good estate.

Man. So! [*Aside.*

Nov I have an ambition, I must confess, of losing my heart before such a fair enemy as yourself, madam, but that silly rogues should be ambitious of losing their arms, and——

Oliv. Looking like a pair of compasses.

Nov. But he has no use of his arms but to set 'em on kimbow; for he never pulls off his hat, at least not to me, I'm sure; for you must know, madam, he has a fantastical hatred to good company: he cann't abide me.

L. Plau. O, be not so severe to him, as to say he hates good company; for, I assure you, he has a great respect, esteem, and kindness for me.

Man. That kind, civil rogue has spoken yet ten thousand times worse of me than t'other.

Oliv. Well, if he be return'd, Mr Novel, then shall I be pester'd again with his boisterous sea-love, have my alcove smell like a cabin, my cham-

ber perfumed with his tarpaulin Brandenburgh, and hear volleys of brandy sighs, enough to make a fog in one's room. Foh! I hate a lover that smells like Thames street.

Man. I can bear no longer, and need hear no more. [*Aside.*] But, since you have these two pulvilio boxes, these essence bottles, this pair of musk-cats here, I hope I may venture to come yet nearer you.

Oliv. Over-heard us then?

Nov. I hope he heard me not. [*Aside.*

L. Plau. Most noble and heroic captain, your most oblig'd, faithful, humble servant.

Nov. Dear tar, thy humble servant.

Man. Away——Madam——

Oliv. Nay, I think I have fitted you for list'ning.

[*Thrusts* NOVEL *and* PLAUSIBLE *on each side.*

Man. You have fitted me, for believing you could not be fickle, though you were young; could not dissemble love, though it was your interest; nor be vain, though you were handsome; nor break your promise, though to a parting lover; nor abuse your best friend, though you had wit: but I take not your contempt of me worse than your esteem or civility of these things here, though you know 'em.

Nov. Things!

L. Plau. Let the captain rally a little.

Man. Yes, things.—Canst thou be angry, thou thing? [*Coming up to* NOVEL.

Nov. No, since my lord says you speak in raillery; for though your sea-raillery be something rough, yet, I confess, we use one another too as bad every day at Locket's, and never quarrel for the matter.

L. Plau. Nay, noble captain, be not angry with him.—A word with you, I beseech you——

[*Whisp. to* MANLY.

Oliv. Well, we women, like the rest of the cheats of the world, when our cullies or creditors have found us out, and will, or can trust no longer, pay debts and satisfy obligations with a quarrel, the kindest present a man can make to his mistress, when he can make no more presents; for oftentimes, in love, as at cards, we were forc'd to play foul, only to give over the game; and use our lovers like the cards,—when we can get no more by 'em, throw 'em up in a pet, upon the first dispute. [*Aside.*

Man. My lord, all that you have made me know by your whispering, which I knew not before, is, that you have a stinking breath:—there's a secret for your secret.

L. Plau. Pshaw! pshaw!

Man. But, madam, tell me, pray, what was't about this spark could take you? Was it the merit of his fashionable impudence, the briskness of his noise, the wit of his laugh, his judgment or fancy in his garniture; or was it a well-trimm'd glove, or the scent of it, that charm'd you?

Nov. Very well, sir. 'Gad, these sea-captains make nothing of dressing: but let me tell you, sir, a man by his dress, as much as by any thing, shews his wit and judgment, nay, and his courage too.

Free. How! his courage, Mr Novel?

Nov. Why, for example, by red breeches, tuck'd-up hair and peruke, a greasy broad-belt, and, now-a-days, a short sword.

Man. Thy courage will appear more by thy belt than thy sword, I dare swear.——Then, madam, for this gentle piece of courtesy, this man of tame honour, what could you find in him? Was it his languishing affected tone, his mannerly look, his second-hand flattery, the refuse of the play-house tyring-rooms; or his slavish obsequiousness, in watching at the door of your box at the play-house, for your hand to your chair; or his jauntee way of playing with your fan; or was it the gunpowder spot on his hand, or the jewel in his ear, that purchas'd your heart?

Oliv. Good jealous captain, no more of your—

L. Plau. No, let him go on, madam, for perhaps he may make you laugh; and I would contribute to your pleasure any way.

Man. Gentle rogue!

Oliv. No, noble captain, you cannot, sure, think any thing could take me more than that heroic title of yours, captain; for you know we women love honour inordinately.

Nov. Ha, ha! faith, she is with thee, bully, for thy raillery.

Man. Faith, so shall I be with you, no bully, for your grinning. [*Aside to* NOVEL.

Oliv. Then that noble, lion-like mien of yours, that soldier-like, weather-beaten complexion, and that manly roughness of your voice, how can they otherwise than charm us women, who hate effeminacy!

Nov. Ha, ha! Faith, I cann't hold from laughing.

Man. Nor shall I from kicking, anon.

[*Aside to* NOVEL.

Oliv. And then that captain-like carelessness in your dress, but especially your scarf; 'twas just such another, only a little higher ty'd, made me in love with my tailor as he pass'd by my window the last training-day; for we women adore a martial man, and you have nothing wanting to make you more one, or more agreeable, but a wooden leg.

L. Plau. Nay, i'faith, there your ladyship was a wag, and it was fine, just, and well rallied.

Nov. Ay, ay, madam, with you ladies, too, martial men must needs be very killing.

Man. Peace, you Bartholomew-fair buffoons! and be not you vain that these laugh on your side, for they will laugh at their own dull jests: but no more of 'em; for I will only suffer now this lady to be witty and merry.

Oliv. You would not have your panegyric interrupted? I go on, then, to your humour. Is there any thing more agreeable than the pretty sullenness of that, than the greatness of your courage? which most of all appears in your spirit of contradiction; for you dare give all mankind the lie: and your opinion is your only mistress; for you renounce that too, when it becomes another man's.

Nov. Hah, hah! I cannot hold; I must laugh at thee, tar, faith!

L. Plau. And, i'faith, dear captain, I beg your pardon, and leave to laugh at you too, though, I protest, I mean you no hurt; but when a lady rallies, a stander-by must be complaisant, and do her reason in laughing. Ha, ha!

Man. Why, you impudent, pitiful wretches, you presume, sure, upon your effeminacy to urge me; for you are in all things so like women, that you may think it in me a kind of cowardice to beat you.

Oliv. No hectoring, good captain.

Man. Or, perhaps, you think this lady's presence secures you: But have a care: she has talk'd herself out of all the respect I had for her, and by using me ill before you, has given me a privilege of using you so before her; but if you would preserve your respect to her, and not be beaten before her, go, be gone immediately.

Nov. Be gone! What?

L. Plau. Nay, worthy, noble, generous captain!

Man. Be gone, I say.

Nov. Be gone again! to us be gone!

Man. No chattering, baboons: instantly be gone, or——

[MANLY *puts 'em out of the room:* NOVEL *struts,* PLAUSIBLE *cringes.*

Nov. Well, madam, we'll go make the cards ready in your bed-chamber: sure you will not stay long with him. [*Exeunt* PLAUS. *and* NOV.

Oliv. Turn hither your rage, good Captain Swagger-huff, and be saucy with your mistress, like a true captain; but be civil to your rivals and betters, and do not threaten any thing but me here; no, not so much as my windows; nor do not think yourself in the lodgings of one of your suburb mistresses beyond the Tower.

Man. Do not give me cause to think so; for those less infamous women part with their lovers just as you did from me,—with unforc'd vows of constancy, and floods of willing tears: but the same winds blow away their lovers and their vows: And for their grief, if the credulous, unexpected fools return, they find new comforters, fresh cullies, such as I found here. The mercenary love of those women, too, suffers shipwreck with their gallants fortunes:—Now you heard Chance has us'd me scurvily, therefore you do too. Well; persevere in your ingratitude, falsehood, and disdain; have constancy in something, and I promise you to be as just to your real scorn as I was to your feign'd love, and henceforth will despise, contemn, hate, loath, and detest you most faithfully.

Enter LETTICE.

Oliv. Get the ombre-cards ready in the next room, Lettice, and—— [*Whispers to* LETTICE.

Free. Bravely resolv'd, captain.

Fid. And you'll be sure to keep your word, I hope, sir?

Man. I hope so too.

Fid. Do you but hope it, sir? If you are not as good as your word, 'twill be the first time you ever bragg'd, sure.

Man. She has restored my reason with my heart.

Free. But now you talk of restoring, captain, there are other things which, next to one's heart, one would not part with; I mean your jewels and money, which, it seems, she has, sir.

Man. What's that to you, sir?

Free. Pardon me:—Whatsoever is yours, I have a share in't, I'm sure, which I will not lose for asking, though you may be too generous, or too angry now to do't yourself.

Fid. Nay, then I'll make bold to make claim too. [*Both going towards* OLIVIA.

Man. Hold, you impertinent, officious fops—How have I been deceiv'd! [*Aside.*

Free. Madam, there are certain appurtenances to a lover's heart, call'd jewels, which always go along with it.

Fid. And which, with lovers, have no value in themselves, but from the heart they come with:—our captain's, madam, it seems you scorn to keep, and much more will those worthless things without it, I am confident.

Oliv. A gentleman so well made as you are may be confident—us easy women could not deny you any thing you ask, if 'twere for yourself; but since 'tis for another, I beg your leave to give him my answer.—An agreeable young fellow this!——And would not be my aversion! [*Aside.*] Captain, your young friend here has a very persuading face, I confess; yet you might have ask'd me yourself for those trifles you left with me, which, (hark you a little, for I dare trust you with the secret; you are a man of so much honour, I'm sure,) I say, then, not expecting your return, or hoping ever to see you again, I have deliver'd your jewels to——

[*Aside to* MANLY.

Man. Whom?

Oliv. My husband.

Man. Your husband!

Oliv. Ay, my husband; for since you could leave me, I am lately and privately marry'd to one who is a man of so much honour and experience in the world, that I dare not ask him for your jewels again, to restore 'em to you, lest he should conclude you never would have parted with 'em to me on any other score but the exchange of my honour; which, rather than you'd let me lose, you'd lose, I'm sure, yourself, those trifles of yours.

Man. Triumphant impudence! But married too.

Oliv. O, speak not so loud; my servants know it not:—I am marry'd: there's no resisting one's destiny, or love, you know.

Man. Why, did you love him too?

Oliv. Most passionately; nay, love him now, though I have marry'd him, and he me: which mutual love I hope you are too good, too generous a man to disturb, by any future claim or visits to me. 'Tis true, he is now absent in the country, but returns shortly; therefore I beg of you, for your own ease and quiet, and my honour, you will never see me more.

Man. I wish I never had seen you.

Oliv. But if you should ever have any thing to say to me hereafter, let that young gentleman there be your messenger.

Man. You would be kinder to him: I find he should be welcome.

Oliv. Alas! his youth would keep my husband from suspicions, and his visits from scandal; for we women may have pity for such as he, but no love: And I already think you do not well to spirit him away to sea, and the sea is already but too rich with the spoils of the shore.

Man. True, perfect woman!——If I could say any thing more injurious to her now, I would; for I could out-rail a bilk'd whore, or a kick'd coward: But, now I think on't, that were rather to discover my love than hatred; and I must not talk; for something I must do. [*Aside.*

Oliv. I think I have given him enough of me now, never to be troubled with him again.—— [*Aside.*

Enter LETTICE.

Well, Lettice, are the cards and all ready within? I come then. Captain, I beg your pardon:—You will not make one at ombre?

Man. No, madam, but I'll wish you a little good luck before you go.

Oliv. No, if you would have me thrive, curse me; for that you'll do heartily, I suppose.

Man. Then if you will have it so, may all the curses light upon you women ought to fear, and you deserve!—First, may the curse of loving play attend your sordid covetousness, and Fortune cheat you, by trusting to her, as you have cheated me; the curse of pride, or a good reputation, fall on your lusts; the curse of affectation on your beauty; the curse of your husband's company on your pleasures; and the curse of your gallant's disappointments in his absence; and the curse of scorn, jealousy, or despair, on your love; and then the curse of loving on.

Oliv. And to requite all your curses, I will only return you your last:—May the curse of loving me still fall upon your proud hard heart, that could be so cruel to me in these horrid curses!—But Heaven forgive you. [*Exit* OLIV.

Man. Hell and the devil reward thee!

Free. Well, you see now, mistresses, like friends, are lost by letting 'em handle your money; and most women are such kind of witches, who can have no power over a man unless you give 'em money; but when once they have got any from you, they never leave you till they have all; therefore I never dare give a woman a farthing.

Man. Well, there is yet this comfort, by losing one's money with one's mistress,—a man is out of danger of getting another; of being made prize again by Love; who, like a pirate, takes you by spreading false colours; but when once you have run your ship a-ground, the treacherous picaroon loofs: so by your ruin you save yourself from slavery at least.

Enter Boy.

Boy. Mrs Lettice, here's Madam Blackacre come to wait upon her honour.

Man. D'ye hear that? Let us be gone before she comes; for henceforward I'll avoid the whole damn'd sex for ever, and woman as a sinking ship. [*Exeunt* MAN. *and* FID.

Free. And I'll stay to revenge on her your quarrel to the sex; for out of love to her jointure, and hatred to business, I would marry her, to make an end of her thousand suits and my thousand engagements, to the comfort of two unfortunate sorts of people,—my plaintiffs and her defendants, my creditors and her adversaries.

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, *led in by Major* OLDFOX, *and* JERRY BLACKACRE *following, laden with green bags.*

Wid. 'Tis an arrant sea ruffian; but I'm glad I met with him at last, to serve him again, major; for the last service was not good in law.—Boy, duck, Jerry, where is my paper of memorandums? Give me, child:—So—Where is my cousin Olivia now, my kind relation?

Free. Here is one that would be your kind relation, madam.

Wid. What mean you, sir?

Free. Why, faith, to be short, to marry you, widow.

Wid. Is not this the wild, rude person we saw at Captain Manly's?

Jer. Ay, forsooth, an't please.

Wid. What would you? What are you? Marry me!

Free. Ay, faith, for I am a younger brother, and you are a widow.

Wid. You are an impertinent person, and go about your business.

Free. I have none, but to marry thee, widow.

Wid. But I have other business, I'd have you to know.

Free. But you have no business a-nights, widow; and I'll make you pleasanter business than any you have; for a-nights, I assure you, I am a man of great business; for the business——

Wid. Go; I'm sure you're an idle fellow.

Free. Try me but, widow, and employ me as you find my abilities and industry.

Old. Pray be civil to the lady, Mr——: she is a person of quality, a person that is no person——

Free. Yes, but she's a person that is a widow: Be you mannerly to her, because you are to pretend only to be her squire, to arm her to her lawyer's chambers; but I will be impudent and bawdy, for she must love and marry me.

Wid. Marry come up, you saucy familiar Jack! You think with us widows 'tis no more than up and ride. God forgive me! Now-a-days, every idle, young, hectoring, roaring companion, with a pair of turn'd red breeches and a broad back, thinks to carry away any widow of the best degree: but I'd have you to know, sir, all widows are not got like places at court,—by impudence and importunity only.

Old. No, no; soft, soft; you are a young man, and not fit——

Free. For a widow? Yes, sure, old man, the fitter.

Old. Go to, go to; if others had not laid in their claims before you.

Free. Not you, I hope.

Old. Why not I, sir? Sure, I am a much more proportionable match for her than you, sir; I who am an elder brother, of a comfortable fortune, and of equal years with her.

Wid. How's that? You unmannerly person, I'd have you to know, I was born but in *ann' undec. Curæli prim'.*

Old. Your pardon, lady, your pardon: be not offended with your very servant——But I say, sir, you are a beggarly younger brother, twenty years younger than her, without any land or stock, but your great stock of impudence; therefore what pretension can you have to her?

Free. You have made it for me: first, because I am a younger brother.

Wid. Why, is that a sufficient plea to a relict? How appears it, sir? by what foolish custom?

Free. By custom time out of mind only.——Then, sir, because I have nothing to keep me after her death, I am the likelier to take care of her life. And for my being twenty years younger than her, and having a sufficient stock of impudence, I leave it to her whether they will be valid exceptions to me, in her widow's law or equity.

Old. Well, she has been so long in Chancery, that I'll stand to her equity and decree between us. Come, lady, pray snap up this young shap at first, or we shall be troubled with him; give him a city widow's answer:—that is, with all the ill breeding imaginable. [*Aside to the Wid.*] Come, madam.

Wid. Well, then, to make an end of this foolish wooing, for nothing interrupts business more; first, for you, major——

Old. You declare in my favour then?

Free. What! direct the court?—Come, young lawyer, thou shalt be a counsel for me [*To* JER.

Jer. Gad, I shall betray your cause then, as well as an old lawyer, never stir.

Wid. First, I say, for you, major, my walking hospital of an ancient foundation, thou bag of mummy, that wouldst fall asunder, if 'twere not for thy cere-clothes——

Old. How, lady?

Free. Ha, ha!

Jer. Hey, brave mother! use all suitors thus, for my sake.

Wid. Thou wither'd, hobbling, distorted cripple; nay, thou art a cripple all over; wouldst thou make me the staff of thy age, the crutch of thy decrepidness? Me——

Free. Well said, widow! Faith, thou wouldst make a man love thee now, without dissembling.

Wid. Thou senseless, impertinent, quibbling, drivelling, feeble, paralytic, impotent, fumbling, frigid nincompoop.

Jer. Hey, brave mother, for calling of names, ifack!

Wid. Wouldst thou make a candle-maker, a nurse of me? Cann't you be bed-rid without a bed-fellow? Won't your swan-skins, furs, flannels, and the scorch'd trencher keep you warm there? Would you have me your Scotch warming-pan, with a pox to you? Me!——

Old. O, Heavens!

Free. I told you I should be thought the fitter man, major.

Jer. Ay, you old fobus, and you would have been my guardian, would you; to have taken care of my estate, that half of it should never come to me, by letting long leases, at pepper-corn rents?

Wid. If I would have married an old man, 'tis well known I might have married an earl; nay, what's more, a judge, and been covered the winter-nights with the lamb-skins, which I prefer to the ermines of nobles. And durst thou think I would wrong my poor minor, there, for you?

Free. Your minor is a chopping minor, God bless him. [*Strokes* JERRY *on the head.*

Old. Your minor may be a major of horse or foot for his bigness: and, it seems, you will have the cheating of your minor to yourself.

Wid. Pray, sir, bear witness:—Cheat my minor! I'll bring my action of the case for the slander.

Free. Nay, I would bear false witness for thee now, widow, since you have done me justice, and have thought me the fitter man for you.

Wid. Fair and softly, sir: 'tis my minor's case more than my own; and I must do him justice now on you.

Free. How?

Old. So, then——

Wid. You are, first, I warrant, some renegado from the inns of court and the law; and thou'lt come to suffer for't by the law; that is, be hang'd.

Jer. Not about your neck, forsooth, I hope.

Free. But, madam——

Old. Hear the court.

Wid. Thou'rt some debauch'd, drunken, lewd, hectoring, gaming companion, and want'st some widow's old gold to nick upon; but, I thank you, sir, that's for my lawyers.

Free. Faith, we should ne'er quarrel about that; for guineas would serve my turn.—But, widow——

Wid. Thou art a foul-mouth boaster of thy lust, a mere braggadocio of thy strength for wine and women, and will belie thyself more than thou dost women, and art every way a base deceiver of women;—and would deceive me too, would you?

Free. Nay, faith, widow, this is judging without seeing the evidence.

Wid. I say, you are a worn-out whore-master at five-and-twenty, both in body and fortune; and cannot be trusted by the common wenches of the town, lest you should not pay 'em; nor by the wives of the town, lest you should pay 'em: so you want women, and would have me your bawd, to procure 'em for you.

Free. Faith, if you had any good acquaintance, widow, 'twould be civilly done of thee; for I am just come from sea.

Wid. I mean, you would have me keep you,

that you might turn keeper; for poor widows are only used like bawds by you: you go to church with us but to get other women to lie with. In fine, you are a cheating, chousing spendthrift, and, having sold your own annuity, would waste my jointure.

Jer. And make havoc of our estate personal, and all our old gilt plate. I should soon be picking up all our mortgaged apostle-spoons, bowls, and beakers, out of most of the ale-houses betwixt Hercules' Pillars and the Boatswain in Wapping; nay, and would be scouring amongst my trees, and make 'em knock down one another, like routed, reeling watchmen at midnight: Would you so, bully?

Free. Nay, pr'ythee, widow, hear me.

Wid. No, sir; I'd have you to know, thou pitiful, paltry, lath-back'd fellow, if I would have married a young man, 'tis well known I could have had any young heir in Norfolk; nay, the hopefullest young man this day at the King's Bench bar; I, that am a relict, and executrix of known plentiful assets and parts; who understand myself and the law. And would you have me under covert-baron again? No, sir, no covert-baron for me.

Free. But, dear widow, hear me. I value you only, not your jointure.

Wid. Nay, sir, hold there: I know your love to a widow is covetousness of her jointure: And a widow, a little stricken in years, with a good jointure, is, like an old mansion-house in a good purchase, never valued; but take one, take t'other. And, perhaps, when you are in possession, you'd neglect it, let it drop to the ground, for want of necessary repairs or expences upon't.

Free. No, widow; one would be sure to keep all right, when one is to forfeit one's lease by dilapidation.

Wid. Fie, fie! I neglect my business with this foolish discourse of love. Jerry, child, let me see the list of the jury: I'm sure my cousin Olivia has some relations amongst 'em. But where is she?

Free. Nay, widow, but hear me one word only.

Wid. Nay, sir, no more, pray: I will no more hearken again to your foolish love-motions than to offers of arbitration. [*Exeunt Wid. and* JER.

Free. Well, I'll follow thee yet; for he that has a pretension at court, or to a widow, must never give over for a little ill usage.

Old. Therefore I'll get her by assiduity, patience, and long-sufferings, which you will not undergo; for you idle young fellows leave off love when it comes to be business; and industry gets more women than love.

Free. Ay; industry, the fool's and old man's merit: but I'll be industrious too, and make a business on't, and get her by law, wrangling, and contests, and not by sufferings. And, because you are no dangerous rival, I'll give thee counsel, major:—

If you litigious widow e'er would gain,
Sigh not to her, but by the law complain:
To her, as to a bawd, defendant sue,
With statutes, and make Justice pimp for you.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Westminster-Hall.*

Enter MANLY *and* FREEMAN—*two Sailors behind.*

Man. I hate this place worse than a man that has inherited a Chancery suit: I wish I were well out on't again.

Free. Why, you need not be afraid of this place; for a man without money needs no more fear a crowd of lawyers than a crowd of pickpockets.

Man. This the reverend of the law would have thought the palace or residence of Justice; but if it be, she lives here with the state of a Turkish emperor,—rarely seen, and besieg'd, rather than defended, by her numerous black guard here.

Free. Methinks 'tis like one of their own halls in Christmas time, whither, from all parts, fools bring their money, to try, by the dice, (not the worst judges,) whether it shall be their own or no; but, after a tedious fretting and wrangling, they drop away all their money on both sides, and, finding neither the better, at last go emptily and lovingly away together to the tavern, joining their curses against the young lawyers' box, that sweeps all, like the old ones.

Man. Spoken like a revelling Christmas lawyer.

Free. Yes, I was one, I confess, but was fain to leave the law, out of conscience, and fall to making false musters: rather chuse to cheat the king than his subjects; plunder, rather than take fees.

Man. Well, a plague and a purse-famine light on the law, and that female limb of it who dragg'd me hither to-day:—But, pr'ythee, go see if, in that crowd of daggled gowns there, thou canst find her. [*Pointing to a crowd of lawyers at the end of the stage.*] [*Exit* FREE.

Manet MANLY.

How hard it is to be an hypocrite!
At least to me, who am but newly so.
I thought it once a kind of knavery,
Nay, cowardice, to hide one's faults; but now,

The common frailty, love, becomes my shame.
He must not know I love the ungrateful still,
Lest he contemn me more than she; for I,
It seems, can undergo a woman's scorn,
But not a man's.

Enter to him FIDELIA.

Fid. Sir, good sir, generous captain.

Man. Pr'ythee, kind impertinence, leave me. Why shouldst thou follow me, flatter my generosity now, since thou knowest I have no money left? If I had it, I'd give it thee, to buy my quiet.

Fid. I never follow'd yet, sir, reward or fame, but you alone; nor do I now beg any thing but leave to share your miseries: You should not be a niggard of 'em, since, methinks, you have enough to spare. Let me follow you now, because you hate me, as you have often said.

Man. I ever hated a coward's company, I must confess.

Fid. Let me follow you till I am none then; for you, I'm sure, will through such worlds of dangers, that I shall be inur'd to 'em; nay, I shall be afraid of your anger more than danger, and so turn valiant out of fear. Dear captain, do not cast me off till you have tried me once more: do not, do not go to sea again without me.

Man. Thou to sea! to court, thou fool.—Remember the advice I gave thee.—Thou art a handsome spaniel, and canst fawn naturally! Go, busk about, and run thyself into the next great man's lobby: first fawn upon the slaves without, and then run into the lady's bed-chamber; thou may'st be admitted at last to tumble her bed:—Go, seek, I say, and lose me; for I am not able to keep thee: I have not bread for myself.

Fid. Therefore I will not go, because then I may help and serve you.

Man. Thou!

Fid. I warrant you, sir; for, at worst, I could beg or steal for you.

Man. Nay, more bragging! Dost thou not know there's venturing your life in stealing? Go, pr'ythee, away: Thou art as hard to shake off as that flattering, effeminating mischief—love.

Fid. Love, did you name? Why, you are not so miserable as to be yet in love, sure?

Man. No, no.—Pr'ythee away, be gone, or—— I had almost discover'd my love and shame: Well, if I had? that thing could not think the worse of me:——or if I did?——no——yes, he shall know it——he shall——but then I must never leave him; for they are such secrets that make parasites and pimps lords of their masters; for any slavery or tyranny is easier than Love's. [*Aside.*] Come hither, since thou art so forward to serve me.—Hast thou but resolution enough to endure the torture of a secret; for such, to some, is insupportable?

Fid. I would keep it as safe as if your dear, precious life depended on't.

Man. Damn your dearness. It concerns more than my life,—my honour.

Fid. Doubt it not, sir.

Man. And do not discover it, by too much fear of discovering it; but have a great care you let not Freeman find it out.

Fid. I warrant you, sir: I am already all joy with the hopes of your commands, and shall be all wings in the execution of 'em:—speak quickly.

Man. You said you'd beg for me.

Fid. I did, sir.

Man. Then you shall beg for me.

Fid. With all my heart, sir.

Man. That is, pimp for me.

Fid. How, sir?

Man. D'ye start? Thinkest thou thou couldst do me any other service? Come, no dissembling honour: I know you can do it handsomely; thou wert made for't: You have lost your time with me at sea; you must recover it.

Fid. Do not, sir, beget yourself more reasons for your aversion to me, and make my obedience to you a fault:—I am the unfittest in the world to do you such a service.

Man. Your cunning arguing against it shews but how fit you are for it. No more dissembling. Here, I say, you must go use it for me, to Olivia.

Fid. To her, sir?

Man. Go, flatter, lie, kneel, promise, any thing to get her for me: I cannot live unless I have her. Didst thou not say thou wouldst do any thing to save my life? And she said you had a persuading face.

Fid. But did not you say, sir, your honour was dearer to you than your life? And would you have me contribute to the loss of that, and carry love from you to the most infamous, most false, and——

Man. And most beautiful! [*Sighs aside.*

Fid. Most ungrateful woman that ever liv'd; for, sure, she must be so, that could desert you so soon, use you so basely, and so lately too.—Do not, do not forget it, sir, and think——

Man. No, I will not forget it, but think of revenge: I will lie with her out of revenge. Go, be gone, and prevail for me, or never see me more.

Fid. You scorn'd her last night.

Man. I know not what I did last night:—I dissembled last night.

Fid. Heavens!

Man. Be gone, I say, and bring me love or compliance back, or hopes, at least, or I'll never see thy face again; by——

Fid. O! do not swear, sir; first hear me.

Man. I am impatient:—Away:—You'll find me here till twelve. [*Turns away.*

Fid. Sir——

Man. Not one word, no insinuating argument more, or soothing persuasion: you'll have need of all your rhetoric with her:—go, strive to alter her, not me; be gone.

[*Exit* MAN. *at the end of the stage.*

Manet FIDELIA.

Fid. Should I discover to him now my sex,
And lay before him his strange cruelty,
'Twould but incense it more.—No, 'tis not time.
For his love must I then betray my own.

Were ever Love or Chance, till now, severe,
Or shifting woman pos'd with such a task?
Forc'd to beg that which kills her, if obtain'd,
And give away her lover, not to lose him.
[*Exit* FIDELIA.

Enter Widow BLACKACRE *in the middle of half a dozen Lawyers, whisper'd to by a Fellow in black;* JERRY BLACKACRE *following the Crowd.*

Wid. Offer me a reference, you saucy company you! D'ye know who you speak to? Art thou a solicitor in Chancery, and offer a reference? A pretty fellow! Mr Serjeant Ploddon, here's a fellow has the impudence to offer me a reference.

Serj. Plod. Who's that has the impudence to offer a reference within these walls

Wid. Nay, for a splitter of causes to do't!

Serj. Plod. No, madam, to a lady learned in the law, as you are, the offer of a reference were to impose upon you.

Wid. No, no, never fear me for a reference, Mr Serjeant. But come, have you not forgot your brief? Are you sure you sha'n't make the mistake of—Hark you——[*Whispers.*] Go, then, go to your court of Common Pleas, and say one thing over and over again: you do it so naturally, you'll never be suspected for protracting time.

Serj. Plod. Come, I know the course of the court, and your business. [*Exit Serj.* PLOD.

Wid. Let's see, Jerry:—Where are my minutes? Come, Mr Quaint, pray go talk a great deal for me in the Chancery: let your words be easy and your sense hard; my cause requires it: Branch it bravely, and deck my cause with flowers, that the snake may lie hidden. Go, go, and be sure you remember the decree of my lord-chancellor,—*tricesimo quârt'* of the queen.

Quaint. I will, as I see cause, extenuate or amplify matter of fact; baffle truth with impudence; answer exceptions with questions, though never so impertinent; for reasons give them words; for law and equity, tropes and figures; and so relax and enervate the sinews of their argument with the oil of my eloquence:—But when my lungs can reason no longer, and not being able to say any thing more for our cause, say every thing of our adversary; whose reputation, though never so clear and evident in the eye of the world, yet, with sharp invectives——

Wid. Alias Billingsgate.

Quaint. With poignant and sour invectives, I say, I will deface, wipe out, and obliterate his fair reputation, even as a record with the juice of lemons; and tell such a story, (for, the truth on't is, all that we can do for our client, in Chancery, is telling a story,) a fine story, a long story, such a story——

Wid. Go, save thy breath for the cause; talk at the bar, Mr Quaint. You are so copiously fluent, you can weary any one's ears sooner than your own tongue. Go, weary our adversary's counsel and the court: Go; thou art a fine-spoken person. Adad, I shall make thy wife jealous of me, if you can but court the court into a decree for us. Go, get you gone.—Remember—— [*Whispers.*] [*Exit* QUAINT.] Come, Mr Blunder, pray bawl soundly for me at the King's Bench; bluster, sputter, question, cavil; but be sure your argument be intricate enough to confound the court, and then you do my business. Talk what you will, but be sure your tongue never stand still; for your own noise will secure your sense from censure: 'tis like coughing or hemming when one has got the belly-ache, which stifles the unmannerly noise. Go, dear rogue, and succeed, and I'll invite thee, ere it be long, to more souz'd venison.

Blund. I'll warrant you, after your verdict, your judgment shall not be arrested upon if's and and's.

Wid. Come, Mr Petulant, let me give you some new instructions for our cause in the Exchequer:—Are the barons set?

Pet. Yes: no: may be they are: may be they are not: what know I? what care I?

Wid. Hey-day! I wish you would but snap up the counsel on t'other side, anon, at the bar, as much, and have a little more patience with me, that I might instruct you a little better.

Pet. You instruct me! What is my brief for, mistress?

Wid. Ay, but you seldom read your brief but at the bar, if you do it then.

Pet. Perhaps I do; perhaps I don't; and perhaps 'tis time enough: pray hold yourself contented, mistress.

Wid. Nay, if you go there too, I will not be contented, sir: Though you, I see, will lose my cause for want of speaking, I would not. You shall hear me, and shall be instructed.—Let's see your brief.

Pet. Send your solicitor to me. Instructed by a woman! I'd have you to know, I do not wear a bar gown for nothing.

Wid. By a woman! And I'd have you to know, I am no common woman, but a woman conversant in the laws of the land as well as yourself, though I have no bar gown.

Pet. Go to, go to, mistress; you are impertinent, and there's your brief for you.—Instruct me! [*Flings her breviate at her.*

Wid. Impertinent to me, you saucy Jack you! You return my breviate, but where's my fee? You'll be sure to keep that, and scan that so well, that if there chance to be but a brass half-crown in't, one's sure to hear on't again: Would you would but look on your breviate half so narrowly. But pray give me my fee too, as well as my brief.

Pet. Mistress, that's without precedent. When did a counsel ever return his fee, pray? And you are impertinent and ignorant, to demand it.

Wid. Impertinent again, and ignorant to me! Gadsbodikins! you puny upstart in the law, to use me so: you green bag carrier, you murderer of unfortunate causes, the clerk's ink is scarce off of your fingers: you that newly come from lamp-blacking the judges shoes, and are not fit to wipe mine, you call me impertinent and ignorant! I would

give thee a cuff on the ear, sitting the courts, if I were ignorant. Marry gep! if it had not been for me, thou hadst been yet but a hearing counsel at the bar. [*Exit* PETULANT.

Enter Mr BUTTONGOWN, *crossing the Stage in haste.*

Mr Buttongown, Mr Buttongown, whither so fast? What! won't you stay till we are heard?

Butt. I cannot, Mrs Blackacre; I must be at the council; my lord's cause stays there for me.

Wid. And mine suffers here.

Butt. I cannot help it.

Wid. I'm undone.

Butt. What's that to me?

Wid. Consider the five pound fee, if not my cause: that was something to you.

Butt. Away, away; pray be not so troublesome, mistress; I must be gone.

Wid. Nay, but consider a little! I am your old client, my lord but a new one; or, let him be what he will, he will hardly be a better client to you than myself: I hope you believe I shall be in law as long as I live? therefore am no despicable client. Well, but go to your lord; I know you expect he should make you a judge one day: but I hope his promise to you will prove a true lord's promise: But, that he might be sure to fail you, I wish you had his bond for't.

Butt. But what, will you be thus impertinent, mistress?

Wid. Nay, I beseech you, sir, stay, if it be but to tell me my lord's case:—come, in short——

Butt. Nay, then—— [*Exit* BUTTONGOWN.

Wid. Well, Jerry, observe, child, and lay it up for hereafter: These are those lawyers who, by being in all causes, are in none; therefore if you would have them for you, let your adversary fee 'em; for he may chance to depend upon them: and so in being against thee, they'll be for thee.

Jer. Ay, mother, they put me in mind of the unconscionable wooers of widows, who undertake briskly their matrimonial business for their money, but when they have got it once, let who will drudge for them; therefore have a care of them, forsooth:—there's advice for your advice.

Wid. Well said, boy.—Come, Mr Splitcause, pray go see when my cause in Chancery comes on; and go speak with Mr Quillit in the King's Bench, and Mr Quirk in the Common Pleas, and see how our matters go there.

Enter Major OLDFOX.

Old. Lady, a good and propitious morning to you; and may all your causes go as well as if I myself were judge of them.

Wid. Sir, excuse me; I am busy, and cannot answer compliments in Westminster-Hall.—Go, Mr Splitcause, and come to me again, to that bookseller's; there I'll stay for you, that you may be sure to find me.

Old. No, sir, come to the other bookseller's: I'll attend your ladyship thither.

[*Exit* SPLITCAUSE.

Wid. Why to the other?

Old. Because he is my bookseller, lady.

Wid. What, to sell you lozenges for your catarrh, or medicines for your corns? What else can a major deal with a bookseller for?

Old. Lady, he prints for me.

Wid. Why, are you an author?

Old. Of some few essays: deign you, lady, to peruse them.—She is a woman of parts, and I must win her by shewing mine. [*Aside.*

Enter the Bookseller's Boy.

Boy. Will you see Culpepper, mistress; Aristotle's Problems; The Complete Midwife?

Wid. No; let's see Dalton, Hughes, Shepherd, Wingate.

Boy. We have no law books.

Wid. No! You are a pretty bookseller then.

Old. Come, have you e'er a one of my essays left?

Boy. Yes, sir, we have enough, and shall always have them.

Old. How so?

Boy. Why, they are good, steady, lasting ware.

Old. Nay, I hope they will live.—Let's see.—Be pleas'd, madam, to peruse the poor endeavours of my pen; though I say it, that——

[*Gives her a book.*

Jer. Pray let me see St George for Christendom, or, The Seven Champions of England.

Wid. No, no; give him The Young Clerk's Guide. What, we shall have you read yourself into a humour of rambling and fighting, and studying military discipline, and wearing red breeches!

Old. Nay, if you talk of military discipline, shew him my treatise of The Art of Military.

Wid. Hold; I would as willingly he should read a play.

Jer. O! pray, forsooth, mother, let me have a play.

Wid. No, sirrah; there are young students of the law enough spoil'd already by plays: they would make you in love with your laundress, or, what's worse, some queen of the stage, that was a laundress; and so turn keeper before you are of age.—[*Several crossing the stage.*]—But stay, Jerry, is it not that Mr—what d'ye call him, that goes there; he that offer'd to sell me a suit in Chancery for five hundred pounds; for a hundred down, and only paying the clerk's fees?

Jer. Ay, forsooth, 'tis he.

Wid. Then stay here, and have a care of the bags, whilst I follow him:—have a care of the bags, I say.

Jer. And do you have a care, forsooth, of the statute against Champertee, I say. [*Exit Widow.*

Enter FREEMAN *to them.*

Free. So, there's a limb of my widow, which was wont to be inseparable from her: she cann't be far.—[*Aside.*]—How now, my pretty son-in law that shall be, where's my widow?

Jer. My mother, but not your widow, will be forth-coming presently.

Free. Your servant, major:—What, are you buy-

ing furniture for a little sleeping closet, which you miscal a study? For you do only by your books, as by your wenches, bind 'em up neatly, and make them fine, for other people to use 'em; and your bookseller is properly your upholsterer; for he furnishes your room, rather than your head.

Old. Well, well, good sea-lieutenant, study you your compass; that's more than your head can deal with.—I will go find out the widow, to keep her out of his sight, or he'll board her whilst I am treating a peace. [*Aside.*

[*Exit* OLDFOX.

Manent FREEMAN, JERRY.

Jer. Nay, pr'ythee, friend, now let me have but The Seven Champions, you shall trust me no longer than till my mother's Mr Splitcause comes; for I hope he'll lend me wherewithal to pay for't.

Free. Lend thee! Here, I'll pay him.—Do you want money, squire? I'm sorry a man of your estate should want money.

Jer. Nay, my mother will ne'er let me be at age: And till then, she says——

Free. At age! Why, you are at age already to have spent an estate, man: there are younger than you have kept their women this three years, have had half a dozen claps, and lost as many thousand pounds at play.

Jer. Ay, they are happy sparks: nay, I know some of my school-fellows, who, when we were at school, were two years younger than me, but now, I know not how, are grown men before me, and go where they will, and look to themselves: but my curmudgeonly mother won't allow me wherewithal to be a man of myself with.

Free. Why, there 'tis: I knew your mother was in fault: Ask but your school-fellows what they did to be men of themselves.

Jer. Why, I know they went to law with their mothers; for they say there's no good to be done upon a widow mother till one goes to law with her: but mine is as plaguy a lawyer as any's of our inn. Then would she marry too, and cut down my trees. Now I should hate, man, to have my father's wife kiss'd, and slapt, and t'other thing too, (you know what I mean,) by another man: and our trees are the purest, tall, even, shady twigs, by my fay.

Free. Come, squire, let your mother and your trees fall as she pleases, rather than wear this gown, and carry green bags all thy life, and be pointed at for a tony. But you shall be able to deal with her yet the common way:—Thou shalt make false love to some lawyer's daughter, whose father, upon the hopes of thy marrying her, shall lend thee money and law, to preserve thy estate and trees: and thy mother is so ugly, nobody will have her, if she cannot cut down thy trees.

Jer. Nay, if I had but any body to stand by me, I am as stomachful as another.

Free. That will I: I'll not see any hopeful young gentleman abus'd.

Boy. By any other but yourself. [*Aside.*

Jer. The truth on't is, mine's as arrant a widow mother to her poor child as any's in England: she won't as much as let one have sixpence in one's pocket to see a motion, or the dancing of the ropes, or——

Free. Come, you sha'n't want money: there's gold for you.

Jer. O Lord, sir, two guineas! D'ye lend me this? Is there no trick in't? Well, sir, I'll give you bond for my security.

Free. No, no; thou hast given me thy face for security: and any body would swear thou dost not look like a cheat. You shall have what you will of me; and if your mother will not be kinder to you, come to me, who will.

Jer. By my fay, he's a curious, fine gentleman!——[*Aside.*] But will you stand by one?

Free. If you can be resolute.

Jer. Can be resolv'd! Gad, if she gives me but a cross word, I'll leave her to-night, and come to you. But, now I have got money, I'll go to Jack of all Trades, at t'other end of the Hall, and buy the neatest, purest things——

Free. And I'll follow the great boy, and my blow at his mother:—Steal away the calf, and the cow will follow you.

[*Exit* JERRY, *followed by* FREEMAN.

Enter, on the other side, MANLY, *Widow* BLACKACRE, *and* OLDFOX.

Man. Damn your cause; cann't you lose it without me? which you are like enough to do, if it be, as you say, an honest one: I will suffer no longer for't.

Wid. Nay, captain, I tell you, you are my prime witness, and the cause is just now coming on, Mr Splitcause tells me. Lord! methinks you should take a pleasure in walking here, as half, you see, now do; for they have no business here, I assure you.

Man. Yes, but I'll assure you, then, their business is to persecute me: but d'ye think I'll stay any longer, to have a rogue, because he knows my name, pluck me aside, and whisper a newsbook secret to me with a stinking breath? A second come piping angry from the court, and sputter in my face his tedious complaint against it? A third law-coxcomb, because he saw me once at a reader's dinner, come and put me a long law-case, to make a discovery of his indefatigable dulness, and my weary'd patience? A fourth, a most barbarous civil rogue, who will keep a man half an hour in the crowd, with a bow'd body, and a hat off, acting the reform'd sign of the Salutation Tavern, to hear his bountiful professions of service and friendship, whilst he cares not if I were damn'd; and I am wishing him hang'd, out of my way:—I'd as soon run the gauntlet as walk t'other turn.

Enter to them JERRY BLACKACRE, *without his bags, but laden with trinkets, which he endeavours to hide from his mother, and follow'd, at a distance, by* FREEMAN.

Wid. O, are you come, sir? But where have you been, you ass? And how came you thus laden?

Jer. Look here, forsooth, mother: now, here's a duck, here's a boar-cat, and here's an owl.

[*Making a noise with cat-calls, and other such like instruments.*

Wid. Yes, there is an owl, sir.

Old. He's an ungracious bird, indeed.

Wid. But go, thou trangame, and carry back those trangames, which thou hast stol'n or purloin'd; for no body would trust a minor in Westminster-Hall, sure.

Jer. Hold yourself contented, forsooth: I have these commodities by a fair bargain and sale; and there stands my witness and creditor.

Wid. How's that? What, sir, d'ye think to get the mother by giving the child a rattle? But where are my bags, my writings, you rascal?

Jer. O la! Where are they indeed? [*Aside.*

Wid. How, sirrah? Speak, come——

Man. Who can tell her? Freeman, I suppose.

[*Apart to him.*

Free. 'Tis true, I made one of your salt-water sharks steal 'em, whilst he was eagerly chusing his commodities, as he calls 'em, in order to my design upon his mother. [*Apart to him.*

Wid. Won't you speak? Where were you, I say, you son of a—an unfortunate woman?—— O, major, I'm undone:—they are all that concern my estate, my jointure, my husband's deed of gift, my evidences for all my suits now depending! What will be come of them?

Free. I'm glad to hear this. [*Aside.*] They'll be safe, I warrant you, madam.

Wid. O, where? where? Come, you villain, along with me, and shew me where.

[*Exeunt Widow,* JERRY, OLDFOX.

Manent MANLY, FREEMAN.

Man. Thou hast taken the right way to get a widow, by making her great boy rebel; for when nothing will make a widow marry, she'll do't to cross her children. But canst thou in earnest marry this harpy, this volume of shrivel'd, blurr'd parchments and law, this attorney's desk?

Free. Ay, ay, I'll marry, and live honestly; that is, give my creditors, not her, due benevolence,—pay my debts.

Man. Thy creditors, you see, are not so barbarous as to put thee in prison, and wilt thou commit thyself to a noisome dungeon for thy life? which is the only satisfaction thou canst give thy creditors by this match.

Free. Why, is not she rich?

Man. Ay, but he that marries a widow for her money will find himself as much mistaken as the widow that marries a young fellow for due benevolence, as you call it.

Free. Why, d'ye think I sha'n't deserve wages? I'll drudge faithfully.

Man. I tell thee again, he that is the slave in the mine has the least propriety in the ore: You may dig and dig; but if thou wouldst have the money, rather get to be her trustee than her husband; for a true widow will make over her estate to any body, and cheat herself, rather than be cheated by her children or a second husband!

Enter to them JERRY, *running, in a fright.*

Jer. O la! I'm undone, I'm undone: my mother will kill me. You said you'd stand by one.

Free. So I will, my brave squire, I warrant thee.

Jer. Ay, but I dare not stay till she comes; for she's as furious, now she has lost her writings, as a bitch when she has lost her puppies.

Man. The comparison's handsome!

Jer. O, she's there!

Enter Widow BLACKACRE *and* OLDFOX.

Free. [*To the Sailor.*] Take him, Jack, and make haste with him to your master's lodging, and be sure you keep him up till I come.

[*Exit* JERRY *and Sailor.*

Wid. O my dear writings!—Where's this heathen rogue, my minor?

Free. Gone to drown or hang himself.

Wid. No, I know him too well; he'll ne'er be *felo de se* that way; but he may go and chuse a guardian of his own head, and so be *felo de ses biens*; for he has not yet chosen one.

Free. Say you so? And he sha'n't want one.

[*Aside.*

Wid. But, now I think on't, 'tis you, sir, have put this cheat upon me; for there is a saying,—take hold of a maid by her smock, and a widow by her writings, and they cannot get from you. But I'll play fast and loose with you yet. If there be law, and my minor and writings are not forth-coming, I'll bring my action of detinue or trover. But first I'll try to find out this guardianless, graceless villain.—Will you jog, major?

Man. If you have lost your evidence, I hope your causes cannot go on, and I may be gone?

Wid. O no; stay but a making water while, (as one may say,) and I'll be with you again.

[*Exeunt Widow and* OLDFOX.

Manent MANLY, FREEMAN.

Free. Well, sure I am the first man that ever began a love-intrigue in Westminster-Hall.

Man. No, sure; for the love to a widow generally begins here: And as the widow's cause goes against the heir or executors, the jointure-rivals commence their suit to the widow.

Free. Well, but how, pray, have you past your time here, since I was forc'd to leave you alone? You have had a great deal of patience.

Man. Is this a place to be alone, or have patience in? But I have had patience indeed; for I have drawn upon me, since I came, but three quarrels and two law-suits.

Free. Nay, faith, you are too curs'd to be let loose in the world; you should be ty'd up again in your sea-kennel, call'd a ship. But how could you quarrel here?

Man. How could I refrain? A lawyer talk'd peremptorily and saucily to me, and as good as gave me the lie.

Free. They do it so often to one another at the bar, that they make no bones on't elsewhere.

Man. However, I gave him a cuff on the ear;

whereupon he jogs two men, whose backs were turned to us, (for they were reading at a bookseller's,) to witness I struck him sitting the courts; which office they so readily promis'd, that I call'd 'em rascals, and knights of the post: One of 'em presently calls two other absent witnesses, who were coming towards us at a distance, whilst the other, with a whisper, desires to know my name, that he might have satisfaction by way of challenge, as t'other by way of writ; but if it were not rather to direct his brother's writ than his own challenge—There, you see, is one of my quarrels, and two of my law-suits.

Free. So:——and the other two?

Man. For desiring a poet to leave off writing, and turn lawyer, because he is dull and impudent, and says or writes nothing now but by precedent.

Free. And the third quarrel?

Man. For giving more sincere advice to a handsome, well-dress'd, young fellow, (who ask'd it too,) not to marry a wench that he lov'd, and I had lain with.

Free. Nay, if you will be giving your sincere advice to lovers and poets, you will not fail of quarrels.

Man. Or if I stay in this place; for I see more quarrels crowding upon me: let's be gone, and avoid 'em.

Enter NOVEL *at a distance, coming towards them.*

A plague on him! That sneer is ominous to us: he is coming upon us, and we shall not be rid of him.

Nov. Dear Bully, don't look so grim upon me: you told me, just now, you had forgiven me a little harmless raillery upon wooden legs last night.

Man. Yes, yes. Pray be gone: I am talking of business.

Nov. Cann't I hear it? I love thee, and will be faithful, and always——

Man. Impertinent! 'Tis business that concerns Freeman only.

Nov. Well, I love Freeman too, and would not divulge his secret:—Pr'ythee speak: pr'ythee, I must——

Man. Pr'ythee let me be rid of thee; I must be rid of thee.

Nov. Faith, thou canst hardly, I love thee so.—Come, I must know the business.

Man. So, I have it now. [*Aside.*] Why, if you needs will know it, he has a quarrel, and his adversary bids him bring two friends with him: now I am one; and we are thinking who we shall have for a third. [*Several crossing the stage.*

Nov. A pox! there goes a fellow owes me an hundred pound, and goes out of town to-morrow: I'll speak with him, and come to you presently. [*Exit* NOVEL.

Man. No, but you won't.

Free. You are dexterously rid of him.

Enter OLDFOX.

Man. To what purpose, since here comes another, as impertinent? I know, by his grin, he is bound hither.

Old. Your servant, worthy, noble captain.—— Well, I have left the widow, because she carry'd me from your company; for, faith, captain, I must needs tell thee, thou art the only officer in England, who was not an Edgehill officer, that I care for.

Man. I'm sorry for't.

Old. Why, wouldst thou have me love them?

Man. Any body, rather than me.

Old. What, you are modest I see! therefore, too, I love thee.

Man. No, I am not modest, but love to brag myself, and cann't patiently hear you fight over the last civil war; therefore go look out the fellow I saw just now here, that walks with his stockings and his sword out at heels, and let him tell you the history of that scar on his cheek, to give you occasion to shew yours, got in the field at Bloomsbury, not that at Edgehill: go to him: poor fellow, he is fasting, and has not yet the happiness this morning to stink of brandy and tobacco: go, give him some to hear you: I am busy.

Old. Well, 'egad, I love thee now, boy, for thy surliness: thou art no tame captain, I see, that will suffer——

Man. An old fox.

Old. All that sha'n't make me angry. I consider thou art peevish, and fretting at some ill success at law. Pr'ythee tell me what ill luck you have met with here.

Man. You.

Old. Do I look like the picture of ill luck? Gadsnouns! I love thee more and more; and shall I tell thee what made me love thee first?

Man. Do; that I may be rid of that damn'd quality and thee.

Old. 'Twas thy wearing that broad sword there.

Man. Here, Freeman, let's change; I'll never wear it more.

Old. How! You won't, sure. Pr'ythee don't look like one of our holy-day captains now-a-days, with a bodkin by your side,—your martinet rogues.

Man. O, then there's hopes. [*Aside.*] What, d'ye find fault with martinet? Let me tell you, sir, 'tis the best exercise in the world; the most ready, most easy, most graceful exercise that ever was us'd, and the most——

Old. Nay, nay, sir, no more. Sir, your servant: If you praise martinet once, I have done with you, Sir Martinet! Martinet! [*Exit* OLDFOX.

Free. Nay, you have made him leave you as willingly as ever he did an enemy; for he was truly for the king and parliament: for the parliament, in their list; and for the king, in cheating 'em of their pay, and never hurting the king's party in the field.

Enter a Lawyer towards them.

Man. A pox!—This way.—Here's a lawyer, I know, threatening us with another greeting.

Law. Sir, sir, your very servant. I was afraid you had forgotten me.

Man. I was not afraid you had forgotten me.

Law. No, sir, we lawyers have pretty good memories.

Man. You ought to have, by your wits.

Law. O, you are a merry gentleman, sir; I remember you were merry when I was last in your company.

Man. I was never merry in thy company, Mr Lawyer, sure.

Law. Why, I'm sure you joked upon me, and shamm'd me all night long.

Man. Shamm'd! pr'ythee what barbarous law-term is that?

Law. Shamming! Why, don't you know that? 'tis all our way of wit, sir.

Man. I am glad I do not know it then.—Shamming! What does he mean by't, Freeman?

Free. Shamming is telling you an insipid, dull lye, with a dull face, which the sly wag the author only laughs at himself: and, making himself believe 'tis a good jest, puts the sham only upon himself.

Man. So, your lawyer's jest, I find, like his practice, has more knavery than wit in't. I should make the worst shammer in England; I must always deal ingenuously, as well with you, Mr Lawyer, and advise you to be seen rather with attornies and solicitors, than such fellows as I am; they will credit your practice more.

Law. No, sir, your company's an honour to me.

Man. No, faith, go thy ways; there goes an attorney, leave me for him; let it be never said a lawyer's civility did him hurt.

Law. No, worthy, honour'd sir, I'll not leave you for any attorney, sure.

Man. Unless he had a fee in his hand.

Law. Have you any business here, sir? Try me; I'd serve you sooner than any attorney breathing.

Man. Business!——So, I have thought of a sure way.—[*Aside.*]—Yes, faith, I have a little business.

Law. Have you so, sir? in what court, sir? what is't, sir? tell me but how I may serve you, and I'll do't, sir; and take it for as great an honour——

Man. Faith, 'tis for a poor orphan of a sea-officer of mine, that has no money; but if it could be follow'd in *forma pauperis*, and when the legacy's recovered ——

Law. *Forma pauperis*, sir!

Man. Ay, sir! [*Several crossing the stage.*

Law. Mr Bumblecase, Mr Bumblecase, a word with you; sir, I beg your pardon at present, I have a little business——

Man. Which is not in *forma pauperis.*

[*Exit Lawyer.*

Free. So, you have now found a way to be rid of people without quarrelling.

Enter Alderman.

Man. But here's a city-rogue will stick as hard upon us, as if I owed him money.

Ald. Captain, noble sir, I am yours heartily, d'ye see: Why should you avoid your old friends?

Man. And why should you follow me? I owe you nothing.

Ald. Out of my hearty respects to you; for there is not a man in England——

Man. Thou wouldst save from hanging, with the expence of a shilling only.

Ald. Nay, nay, but, captain, you are like enough to tell me——

Man. Truth, which you won't care to hear; therefore you had better go talk with some body else.

Ald. No. I know no body can inform me better of some young wit, or spendthrift, that has a good dipt seat and estate in Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Essex, or Kent; any of these would serve my turn; now, if you knew of such a one, and would but help——

Man. You to finish his ruin.

Ald. I'faith, you should have a snip——

Man. Of your nose; you thirty in the hundred rascal, would you make me your squire setter, your bawd for manors? [*Takes him by the nose.*

Ald. Oh!

Free. Hold, or here will be your third law-suit.

Ald. Gads precious, you hectoring person you, are you wild? I meant you no hurt, sir! I begin to think (as things go) land-security best, and have, for a convenient mortgage, some ten, fifteen, or twenty thousand pounds by me.

Man. Then go lay it out upon an hospital, and take a mortgage of heaven, according to your city-custom; for you think, by laying out a little money, to hook in that too hereafter; do, I say, and keep the poor you've made by taking forfeitures, that heaven may not take yours.

Ald. No, to keep the cripples you make this war; this war spoils our trade.

Man. Damn your trade, 'tis the better for't.

Ald. What, will you speak against our trade?

Man. And dare you speak against the war, our trade?

Ald. Well, he may be a convoy of ships I am concern'd in.—[*Aside.*]—Come, captain, I will have a fair correspondency with you, say what you will.

Man. Then pr'ythee be gone.

Ald. No, faith; pr'ythee, captain, let's go drink a dish of laced coffee, and talk of the times; Come, I'll treat you; nay, you shall go, for I have no business here.

Man. But I have.

Ald. To pick up a man to give thee a dinner: Come, I'll do thy business for thee.

Man. Faith, now I think on't, so you may, as well as any man; for 'tis to pick up a man, to be bound with me, to one who expects city-security, for ——

Ald. Nay, then your servant, captain; business must be done.

Man. Ay, if it can; but hark you, alderman, without you——

Ald. Business, sir, I say, must be done; and

there's an officer of the treasury I have an affair with—— [*Several crossing the stage.*

[*Exit Alderman.*

Man. You see now what the mighty friendship of the world is; what all ceremony, embraces, and plentiful professions come to: you are no more to believe a professing friend than a threatening enemy; and, as no man hurts you that tells you he'll do you a mischief; no man, you see, is your servant who says he is so. Why the devil, then, should a man be troubled with the flattery of knaves, if he be not a fool or cully; or with the fondness of fools, if he be not a knave or cheat?

Free. Only for his pleasure; for there is some in laughing at fools and disappointing knaves.

Man. That's a pleasure, I think, would cost you too dear, as well as marrying your widow to disappoint her: but, for my part, I have no pleasure by 'em, but in despising 'em, wheresoe'er I meet 'em; and then the pleasure of hoping so to be rid of 'em. But now my comfort is, I am not worth a shilling in the world, which all the world shall know, and then I'm sure I shall have none of 'em near me.

Free. A very pretty comfort, which I think you pay too dear for: But is the twenty pound gone since the morning?

Man. To my boat's crew; would you have the poor, honest, brave fellows want?

Free. Rather than you or I.

Man. Why, art thou without money? thou who art a friend to every body?

Free. I ventured my last stake upon the squire, to nick him of his mother; and cannot help you to a dinner, unless you will go dine with my lord ——

Man. No, no, the ordinary is too dear for me, where flattery must pay for my dinner: I am no herald or poet.

Free. We'll go to the bishop's——

Man. There you must flatter the old philosophy: I cannot renounce my reason for a dinner.

Free. Why, then let's go to your alderman's.

Man. Hang him, rogue! that were not to dine, for he makes us drunk with lees of sack before dinner, to take away our stomach; and there you must call usury and extortion God's blessing, or the honest turning of the penny; hear him brag of the leather breeches in which he trotted first to town; and make a greater noise with his money in his parlour, than his cashiers do in his counting-house, without hopes of borrowing a shilling.

Free. Ay, a pox on't! 'tis like dining with the great gamesters; and when they fall to their common dessert, see the heaps of gold drawn on all hands, without going to twelve. Let us go to my Lady Godly's.

Man. There, to flatter her looks, you must mistake her grand-children for her own; praise her cook, that she may rail at him; and feed her dogs, not yourself.

Free. What d'ye think of eating with your lawyer then?

Man. Eat with him! Damn him; to hear him employ his barbarous eloquence in a reading upon the two-and-thirty good bits in a shoulder of veal; and be forced yourself to praise the cold bribe-pye, that stinks, and drink law-French wine, as rough and harsh as his law French. A pox on him, I'd rather dine in the templer-rounds or walks, with the knights without noses, or the knights of the post; who are honester fellows, and better company. But let us home, and try our fortune; for I'll stay no longer here for your old damn'd widow.

Free. Well, let us; come then; for I must go for my damn'd widow, and look after my new damn'd charge; three or four hundred years ago, a man might have dined in this hall.

Man. But now, the lawyer only here is fed,
And, bully like, by quarrels gets his bread.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—MANLY's *Lodgings.*

Enter MANLY *and* FIDELIA.

Man. Well, there's success in thy face; hast thou prevail'd? say.

Fid. As I could wish, sir.

Man. So, I told thee what thou wert fit for, and thou wouldst not believe me. Come, thank me for bringing thee acquainted with thy genius. Well, thou hast mollified her heart for me?

Fid. No, sir, not so; but what's better.

Man. How? what's better!

Fid. I shall harden your heart against her.

Man. Have a care, sir, my heart is too much in earnest to be fooled with, and my desire at height, and needs no delays to incite it; what, you are too good a pimp already, and know how to endear pleasure, by withholding it? but leave off your page's, bawdy-house tricks, sir, and tell me, will she be kind?

Fid. Kinder than you could wish, sir.

Man. So then; well, pr'ythee, what said she?

Fid. She said——

Man. What? thou'rt so tedious; speak comfort to me; what?

Fid. That, of all things, you are her aversion.

Man. How?

Fid. That she would sooner take a bed-fellow out of an hospital, and diseases into her arms, than you.

Man. What

Fid. That she would rather trust her honour, with a dissolute, debauch'd hector; nay worse, with a finical baffled coward, all over loathsome with affectation of the fine gentleman.

Man. What's all this you say?

Fid. Nay, that my offers of your love to her were more offensive, than when parents woo their virgin-daughters to the enjoyment of riches only; and that you were, in all circumstances, as nauseous to her as a husband on compulsion.

Man. Hold! I understand you not.

Fid. So, 'twill work, I see. [*Aside.*

Man. Did you not tell me——

Fid. She called you ten thousand ruffians.

Man. Hold, I say.

Fid. Brutes——

Man. Hold.

Fid. Sea-monsters——

Man. Damn your intelligence; hear me a little now.

Fid. Nay, surely coward she call'd you too.

Man. Won't you hold yet? hold, or——

Fid. Nay, sir, pardon me; I could not but tell you she had the baseness, the injustice, to call you coward, sir, coward, coward, sir!

Man. Not yet——

Fid. I've done—Coward, sir!

Man. Did not you say she was kinder than I could wish her?

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. How then?——O——I understand you now. At first she appear'd in rage and disdain, the truest sign of a coming woman; but at last you prevail'd, it seems; did you not?

Fid. Yes, sir.

Man. So then, let's know that only; come pr'ythee, without delays; I'll kiss thee for that news beforehand.

Fid. So; the kiss I'm sure is welcome to me, whatsoe'er the news will be to you. [*Aside.*

Man. Come, speak, my dear volunteer.

Fid. How welcome were that kind word too, if it were not for another woman's sake! [*Aside.*

Man. What, won't you speak? You prevail'd for me at last, you say?

Fid. No, sir.

Man. No more of your fooling, sir; it will not agree with my impatience or temper.

Fid. Then, not to fool you, sir, I spake to her for you, but prevail'd for myself; she would not hear me when I spake in your behalf; but bid me say what I would in my own, though she gave me no occasion, she was so coming, and so was kinder, sir, than you could wish; which I was only afraid to let you know, without some warning.

Man. How's this? Young man, you are of a lying age; but I must hear you out, and if——

Fid. I would not abuse you, and cannot wrong her by any report of her, she is so wicked.

Man. How! wicked? had she the impudence, at the second sight of you only——

Fid. Impudence, sir! Oh, she has impudence enough to put a court out of countenance, and debauch a stews.

Man. Why, what said she?

Fid. Her tongue, I confess, was silent; but her speaking eyes gloated such things, more immodest and lascivious than ravishers can act, or women under a confinement think.

Man. I know there are, whose eyes reflect more obscenity, than the glasses in alcoves; but there are others who use a little art with their looks, to make 'em seem more beautiful, not more loving; which vain young fellows, like you, are apt to interpret in their own favour, and to the lady's wrong.

Fid. Seldom, sir; pray have you a care of gloting eyes; for he that loves to gaze upon 'em, will find at last, a thousand fools and cuckolds in 'em, instead of Cupids.

Man. Very well, sir; but, what, you had only eye-kindness from Olivia?

Fid. I tell you again, sir, no woman sticks there; eye-promises of love they only keep nay, they are contracts which make you sure of 'em. In short, sir, she seeing me with shame and amazement dumb, inactive, and restless, threw her twisting arms about my neck, and smother'd me with a thousand tasteless kisses; believe me, sir, they were so to me.

Man. Why did you not avoid 'em then?

Fid. I fenced with her eager arms, as you did with the grapples of the enemy's fire-ship; and nothing but cutting 'em off could have freed me.

Man. Damn'd, damn'd woman, that could be so false and infamous! And damn'd, damn'd heart of mine, that cannot yet be false, though so infamous! What easy, tame, suffering, trampled thing does that little God of talking cowards make of us! but——

Fid. So! it works, I find, as I expected. [*Aside.*

Man. But she was false to me before; she told me so herself; and yet I could not quite believe it; but she was, so that her second falseness is a favour to me, not an injury, in revenging me upon the man that wrong'd me first of her love.—Her love!——a whore's, a witch's love!——But, what, did she not kiss well, sir? I'm sure I thought her lips——but I must not think of 'em more——but yet they are such I could still kiss ——grow to——and then tear off with my teeth, grind 'em into mammocks, and spit 'em into her cuckold's face.

Fid. Poor man, how uneasy is he! I have hardly the heart to give him so much pain, tho' withal I give him a cure, and to myself new life. [*Aside.*

Man. But, what, her kisses sure could not but warm you into desire at last, or a compliance with hers at least?

Fid. Nay more, I confess——

Man. What more? speak.

Fid. All you could fear had pass'd between us, if I could have been made to wrong you, sir, in that nature.

Man. Could have been made! you lie, you did.

Fid. Indeed, sir, 'twas impossible for me; besides, we were interrupted by a visit; but, I confess, she would not let me stir, till I promised to return to her again within this hour, as soon as it should be dark; by which time she would dispose of her visit, and her servants, and herself,

for my reception; which I was fain to promise, to get from her.

Man. Ha!

Fid. But if ever I go near her again, may you, sir, think me as false to you as she is; hate and renounce me, as you ought to do her, and I hope will do now.

Man. Well, but now I think on't, you shall keep your word with your lady. What! a young fellow, and fail the first, nay, so tempting an assignation!

Fid. How, sir?

Man. I say you shall go to her when 'tis dark, and shall not disappoint her.

Fid. I, sir! I should disappoint her more by going; for——

Man. How so?

Fid. Her impudence, and injustice to you, will make me disappoint her love; loath her.

Man. Come, you have my leave; and if you disgust her, I'll go with you, and act love, whilst you shall talk it only.

Fid. You, sir! nay, then I'll never go near her. You act love, sir! You must but act it indeed, after all I have said to you. Think of your honour, sir—Love——

Man. Well, call it revenge, and that is honourable: I'll be revenged on her, and thou shalt be my second.

Fid. Not in a base action, sir, when you are your own enemy; O, go not near her, sir, for heaven's sake, for your own, think not of it.

Man. How concern'd you are! I thought I should catch you. What, you are my rival at last, and are in love with her yourself; and have spoken ill of her out of your love to her, not me; and therefore would not have me go to her!

Fid. Heaven witness for me, 'tis because I love you only, I would not have you go to her.

Man. Come, come, the more I think on't, the more I'm satisfied you do love her; those kisses, young man, I knew were irresistible; 'tis certain.

Fid. There is nothing certain in the world, sir, but my truth, and your courage.

Man. Your servant, sir. Besides, false and ungrateful as she has been to me; and though I may believe her hatred to me great as you report it, yet I cannot think you are so soon, and at that rate, beloved by her, though you may endeavour it.

Fid. Nay, if that be all, and you doubt it still, sir, I will conduct you to her; and, unseen, your ears shall judge of her falseness and my truth to you; if that will satisfy you.

Man. Yes, there is some satisfaction in being quite out of doubt; because 'tis that alone withholds us from the pleasure of revenge.

Fid. Revenge! what revenge can you have, sir? Disdain is best revenged by scorn; and faithless love, by the loving another, and making her happy with the other's losings; which, if I might advise——

Enter FREEMAN.

Man. Not a word more.

Free. What, are you talking of love yet, captain? I thought you had done with't.

Man. Why, what did you hear me say?

Free. Something imperfectly of love, I think.

Man. I was only wondering why fools, rascals, and desertless wretches, should still have the better of men of merit with all women, as much as with their own common mistress, Fortune!

Free. Because most women, like Fortune, are blind, seem to do all things in jest, and take pleasure in extravagant actions; their love deserves neither thanks, or blame, for they cannot help it; 'tis all sympathy; therefore the noisy, the finical, the talkative, the cowardly, and effeminate, have the better of the brave, the reasonable, and man of honour; for they have no more reason in their love, or kindness, than fortune itself.

Man. Yes, they have their reason. First, honour in a man they fear too much to love; and sense in a lover upbraids their want of it; and they hate any thing that disturbs their admiration of themselves: but they are of that vain number, who had rather shew their false generosity, in giving away profusely to worthless flatterers, than in paying just debts. And, in short, all women, like fortune, (as you say) and rewards, are lost, by too much meriting.

Fid. All women, sir! sure there are some who have no other quarrel to a lover's merit, but that it begets their despair of him.

Man. Thou art young enough to be credulous; but we——

Enter 1*st Sailor.*

1 *Sail.* Here are now below, the scolding, daggled gentlewoman, and that major Old——old ——Fop, I think you call him.

Free. Oldfox! pr'ythee bid 'em come up, with your leave, captain, for now I can talk with her upon the square; if I shall not disturb you.

Man. No; for I'll be gone. Come, volunteer.

Free. Nay, pray stay; the scene betwixt us will not be so tedious to you as you think; besides, you shall see how I have rigg'd my squire out with the remains of my shipwreck'd wardrobe; he is under your sea-valet de chambre's hands, and by this time drest, and will be worth your seeing. Stay, and I'll fetch my fool.

Man. No; you know I cannot easily laugh; besides, my volunteer and I have business abroad.

[*Exeunt* MANLY, FIDELIA *on one side*, FREEMAN *on the other.*

Enter Major OLDFOX *and Widow* BLACKACRE.

Wid. What, nobody here! Did not the fellow say he was within?

Old. Yes, lady; and he may be perhaps a little busy at present; but, if you think the time long till he comes, [*Unfolding papers.*] I'll read you here some of the fruits of my leisure, the overflowings of my fancy and pen. (To value me right, she must know my parts.)—[*Aside.*]—Come——

Wid. No, no; I have reading work enough of my own, in my bag, I thank you.

Old. Ay, law, madam; but here's a poem, in blank verse, which I think a handsome declaration of one's passion.

Wid. O! if you talk of declarations, I'll shew you one of the prettiest penn'd things, which I mended too myself, you must know.

Old. Nay, lady, if you have used yourself so much to the reading of harsh law, that you hate smooth poetry, here is a character for you, of——

Wid. A character? Nay, then I'll shew you my bill in Chancery here, that gives you such a character of my adversary, makes him as black—

Old. Pshaw; away, away, lady. But if you think the character too long, here is an epigram, not above twenty lines, upon a cruel lady, who decreed her servant should hang himself, to demonstrate his passion.

Wid. Decreed! if you talk of decreeing, I have such a decree here, drawn by the finest clerk——

Old. O lady, lady, all interruption, and no sense between us, as if we were lawyers at the bar! But I had forgot, Apollo and Littleton never lodge in a head together. If you hate verses, I'll give you a cast of my politics in prose: 'tis a letter to a friend in the country; which is now the way of all such sober, solid persons as myself, when they have a mind to publish their disgust to the times; though perhaps, between you and I, they have no friend in the country. And sure a politic, serious person may as well have a feign'd friend in the country to write to, as well as an idle poet a feign'd mistress to write to. And so here's my letter to a friend, or no friend, in the country, concerning the late conjuncture of affairs, in relation to Coffee-houses: or, The Coffee-man's Case.

Wid. Nay, if your letter have a case in't, 'tis something; but first, I'll read you a letter of mine to a friend in the country, call'd a letter of attorney.

Enter to them FREEMAN *and* JERRY BLACKACRE, *in an old gaudy suit, and red breeches, of* FREEMAN'S.

Old. What, interruption still? O the plague of interruption! worse to an author than the plague of critics!

Wid. What's this I see? Jerry Blackacre, my minor, in red breeches! What, hast thou left the modest seemly garb of gown and cap, for this? And have I lost all my good inns-of-Chancery breeding upon thee then? And wilt thou go a breeding thyself from our inns of Chancery and Westminster-Hall, at coffee-houses, and ordinaries, play-houses, tennis-courts, and bawdy-houses?

Jer. Ay, ay, what then? perhaps I will; but what's that to you? Here's my guardian and tutor now, forsooth, that I am out of your huckster's hands.

Wid. How? thou hast not chosen him for thy guardian yet?

Jer. No, but he has chosen me for his charge, and that's all one; and I'll do any thing he'll have me, and go all the world over with him; to ordinaries, and bawdy-houses, or any where else.

Wid. To ordinaries and bawdy-houses! have a care, minor, thou wilt enfeeble there thy estate and body: do not go to ordinaries and bawdy-houses, good Jerry.

Jer. Why, how come you to know any ill by bawdy-houses? You never had any hurt by 'em, had you, forsooth? Pray hold yourself contented; if I do go where money and wenches are to be had, you may thank yourself; for you used me so unnaturally, you would never let me have a penny to go abroad with; nor so much as come near the garret where your maidens lay; nay, you would not so much as let me play at hot-cockles with 'em, nor have any recreation with 'em, tho' one should have kiss'd you behind, you were so unnatural a mother, so you were.

Free. Ay, a very unnatural mother, faith, squire.

Wid. But, Jerry, consider thou art yet but a minor; however, if thou wilt go home with me again, and be a good child, thou shalt see——

Free. Madam, I must have a better care of my heir under age, than so; I would sooner trust him alone with a stale waiting-woman and a parson, than with his widow-mother, and her lover or lawyer.

Wid. Why, thou villain, part mother and minor! Rob me of my child and my writings! but thou shalt find there's law; and as in the case of ravishment, of guard—Westminster the second.

Old. Young gentleman, squire, pray be ruled by your mother and your friends.

Jer. Yes, I'll be ruled by my friends, therefore not my mother, so I won't: I'll chuse him for my guardian till I am of age; nay, may be for as long as I live.

Wid. Wilt thou so, thou wretch? And when thou'rt of age, thou wilt sign, seal, and deliver too, wilt thou?

Jer. Yes, marry will I, if you go there too.

Wid. O do not squeeze wax, son; rather go to ordinaries and bawdy-houses than squeeze wax: If thou dost that, farewell the goodly manor of Blackacre, with all its woods, underwoods, and appurtenances whatever. Oh, oh! [*Weeps.*

Free. Come, madam, in short, you see I am resolved to have a share in the estate, yours or your son's; if I cannot get you, I'll keep him who is less coy you find; but, if you would have your son again, you must take me too. Peace or war? Love or law? You see my hostage is in my hand: I'm in possession.

Wid. Nay, if one of us must be ruin'd, e'en let it be him. By my body, a good one! Did you ever know yet a widow marry or not marry for the sake of her child? I'd have you to know, sir, I shall be hard enough for you both yet, without marrying you; if Jerry won't be ruled by me—What say you, booby, will you be ruled? speak.

Jer. Let one alone, cann't you?

Wid. Wilt thou chuse him for guardian, whom I refuse for husband?

Jer. Ay, to chuse, I thank you.

Wid. And are all my hopes frustrated? Shall I never hear thee put cases again to John the butler, or our vicar? Never see thee amble the circuit with the judges; and hear thee, in our townhall, louder than the crier?

Jer. No; for I have taken my leave of lawyering, and pettifogging.

Wid. Pettifogging! thou prophane villain, hast thou so?—Pettifogging!——then you shall take your leave of me, and your estate too; thou shalt be an alien to me and it for ever.—Pettifogging!

Jer. O, but if you be there too, mother, we have the deed and settlements, I thank you: Would you cheat me of my estate, ifac?

Wid. No, no, I will not cheat your little brother Bob, for thou wert not born in wedlock.

Free. How's that?

Jer. How? What quirk has she got in her head now?

Wid. I say, thou canst not, shalt not, inherit the Blackacre estate.

Free. Why? why, forsooth? What d'ye mean, if you go there too?

Wid. Thou art but my base child; and, according to the law, can'st not inherit it: nay, thou art not so much as bastardeigne.

Jer. What, what? Am I then the son of a whore, mother?

Wid. The law says———

Free. Madam, we know what the law says; but have a care what you say: do not let your passion to ruin your son, ruin your reputation.

Wid. Hang reputation, sir! am not I a widow? have no husband, nor intend to have any? Nor would you, I suppose, now have me for a wife. So, I think now I'm revenged on my son and you, without marrying, as I told you.

Free But, consider, madam.

Jer. What! have you no shame left in you, mother?

Wid. Wonder not at it, major; 'tis often the poor pressed widow's case, to give up her honour to save her jointure; and seems to be a light woman rather than marry: as some young men, they say, pretend to have the filthy disease, and lose their credit with most women, to avoid the importunities of some. [*Aside to* OLDFOX.

Free. But one word with you, madam.

Wid. No, no, sir. Come, major, let us make haste now to the prerogative court.

Old. But, lady, if what you say be true, will you stigmatize your reputation on record? And, if it be not true, how will you prove it?

Wid. Pshaw! I can prove any thing; and for my reputation, know, major, a wise woman will no more value her reputation, in disinheriting a rebellious son of a good estate, than she would in getting him to inherit an estate.

[*Exeunt Wid. and* OLDFOX.

Free. Madam——we must not let her go so, squire.

Jer. Nay, the devil cann't stop her though, if she has a mind to't. But, come, bully-guardian, we'll go advise with three attornies, two proctors, two solicitors, and a shrewd man of White-Friars, neither attorney, proctor, or solicitor, but as pure a pimp to the law as any of 'em; and sure all they will be hard enough for her; and, I fear, bully-guardian, you are too good a joker to have any law in your head.

Free. Thou'rt in the right on't, squire; I understand no law: especially against bastards, since I'm sure the custom is against that law; and more people get estates by being so than lose 'em.

[*Exeunt.*

The Scene changes to OLIVIA'S *Lodging.*

Enter Lord PLAUSIBLE, *and Boy with a candle.*

L. Plaus. Little gentleman, your most obedient, faithful, humble servant: where, I beseech you, is that divine person, your noble lady?

Boy. Gone out, my lord; but commanded me to give you this letter. [*Gives him a letter.*

Enter to him NOVEL.

L. Plaus. Which he must not observe.

[*Aside. Puts it up.*

Nov. Hey, boy, where is thy lady?

Boy. Gone out, sir; but I must beg a word with you. [*Gives him a letter, and exit.*

Nov. For me? So. [*Puts up the letter.*

Servant, servant, my lord; you see the lady knew of your coming, for she is gone out.

L. Plaus. Sir, I humbly beseech you not to censure the lady's good breeding: she has reason to use more liberty with me than with any other man.

Nov. How, viscount, how?

L. Plaus. Nay, I humbly beseech you, be not in choler; where there is most love, there may be most freedom.

Nov. Nay, then 'tis time to come to an eclaircissement with you, and to tell you, you must think no more of this lady's love.

L. Plaus. Why, under correction, dear sir?

Nov. There are reasons, reasons, viscount.

L. Plaus. What, I beseech you, noble sir?

Nov. Pry'thee, pry'thee, be not impertinent, my lord; some of you lords are such conceited, well-assured, impertinent rogues—

L. Plaus. And you noble wits are so full of shamming and drolling, one knows not where to have you seriously.

Nov. Well, you shall find me in bed with this lady one of these days.

L. Plaus. Nay, I beseech you, spare the lady's honour; for her's and mine will be all one shortly.

Nov. Pr'ythee, my lord, be not an ass: dost thou think to get her from me? I have had such good encouragements—

L. Plaus. I have not been thought unworthy of 'em.

Nov. What, not like mine! Come to an eclaircissement, as I said.

L. Plaus. Why, seriously then, she has told me, viscountess sounded prettily.

Nov. And me, that Novel was a name she would sooner change her's for, than for any title in England.

L. Plaus. She has commended the softness and respectfulness of my behaviour.

Nov. She has praised the briskness of my raillery of all things, man.

L. Plaus. The sleepiness of my eyes she liked.

Nov. Sleepiness! dulness, dulness! But the fierceness of mine she adored.

L. Plaus. The brightness of my hair she liked.

Nov. The brightness! no, the greasiness, I warrant; but the blackness, and the lustre of mine, she admires.

L. Plaus. The gentleness of my smile.

Nov. The subtlety of my leer.

L. Plaus. The clearness of my complexion.

Nov. The redness of my lips.

L. Plaus. The whiteness of my teeth.

Nov. My janty way of picking them.

L. Plaus. The sweetness of my breath.

Nov. Ha, ha!—nay then she abused you, 'tis plain; for you know what Manly said: the sweetness of your pulvillio she might mean; but for your breath! ha, ha, ha. Your breath is such, man, that nothing but tobacco can perfume; and your complexion nothing could mend, but the small-pox.

L. Plaus. Well, sir, you may please to be merry; but, to put you out of all doubt, sir, she has received some jewels from me of value.

Nov. And presents from me; besides what I presented her jantily, by way of ombre, of three or four hundred pound value, which I'm sure are the earnest pence for our love-bargain.

L. Plaus. Nay then, sir, with your favour, and to make an end of all your hopes, look you here, sir,—she has writ to me.

[*Deliver to each other their letters.*

Nov. How! how! well, well, and so she has to me; look you there———

L. Plaus. What's here?

Nov. How's this? [*Reads out.*]

"My dear Lord,

"You'll excuse me, for breaking my word with you, since 'twas to oblige, not offend you; for I am only gone abroad but to disappoint Novel, and meet you in the drawing-room; where I expect you with as much impatience as when I used to suffer Novel's visits, the most impertinent fop that ever affected the name of a wit, therefore not capable, I hope, to give you jealousy; for, for your sake alone, you saw I renounced an old lover, and will do all the world. Burn the letter, but lay up the kindness of it in your heart, with your

OLIVIA."

Very fine! but pray let's see mine.

L. Plaus. I understand it not; but sure she cannot think so of me. [*Reads the other letter.*

Nov. Humh! hah!——"meet———for your sake"———umh———"quitted an old lover ———world———burn———in your heart with your OLIVIA."

Just the same, the names only alter'd.

L. Plaus. Surely there must be some mistake; or somebody has abused her and us.

Nov. Yes, you are abused, no doubt on't, my lord, but I'll to Whitehall, and see.

L. Plaus. And I, where I shall find you are abused.

Nov. Where, if it be so, for our comfort, we cannot fail of meeting with fellow-sufferers enough; for, as Freeman said of another, she stands in the drawing-room, like the glass, ready for all comers, to set their gallantry by her: and, like the glass too, lets no man go from her unsatisfied with himself. [*Exeunt Ambo.*

Enter OLIVIA *and Boy.*

Oliv. Both here, and just gone?

Boy. Yes, madam.

Oliv. But are you sure neither saw you deliver the other a letter?

Boy. Yes, yes, madam, I am very sure.

Oliv. Go then to the Old Exchange, to Westminster, Holborn, and all the other places I told you of; I shall not need you these two hours: Begone, and take the candle with you, and be sure you leave word again below, I am gone out, to all that ask.

Boy. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Oliv. And my new lover will not ask, I'm sure; he has his lesson, and cannot miss me here, tho' in the dark: which I have purposely design'd as a remedy against my blushing gallant's modesty; for young lovers, like game-cocks, are made bolder by being kept without light.

Enter her Husband, VERNISH, *as from a journey.*

Ver. Where is she? Darkness every where! [*Softly.*

Oliv. What, come before your time? My soul! my life! your haste has augmented your kindness; and let me thank you for it thus and thus ———[*Embracing and kissing him.*] And though, my soul, the little time since you left me has seem'd an age to my impatience, sure it is yet but seven———

Ver. How! Who's that you expected after seven?

Oliv. Ha! my husband return'd! and have I been throwing away so many kind kisses on my husband, and wrong'd my lover already? [*Aside.*

Ver. Speak, I say, who was't you expected after seven?

Oliv. What shall I say?——oh———[*Aside.* Why 'tis but seven days, is it, dearest, since you went out of town? and I expected you not so soon.

Ver. No, sure, 'tis but five days since I left you.

Oliv. Pardon my impatience, dearest, I thought 'em seven at least.

Ver. Nay then——

Oliv. But, my life, you shall never stay half so long from me again; you sha'n't indeed, by this kiss, you sha'n't.

Ver. No, no; but why alone in the dark?

Oliv. Blame not my melancholy in your absence———But, my soul, since you went, I have strange news to tell you: Manly is returned.

Ver. Manly return'd! Fortune forbid!

Oliv. Met with the Dutch in the Channel, fought, sunk his ship, and all he carried with him: he was here with me yesterday.

Ver. And did you own our marriage to him?

Oliv. I told him I was married, to put an end to his love and my trouble; but to whom is yet a secret kept from him and all the world: And I have used him so scurvily, his great spirit will ne'er return to reason it farther with me; I have sent him to sea again, I warrant.

Ver. 'Twas bravely done. And sure he will now hate the shore more than ever, after so great a disappointment. Be you sure only to keep a while our great secret, till he be gone: in the mean time I'll lead the easy, honest fool by the nose, as I used to do; and, whilst he stays, rail with him at thee; and, when he's gone, laugh with thee at him. But have you his cabinet of jewels safe? Part not with a seed-pearl to him, to keep him from starving.

Oliv. Nor from hanging.

Ver. He cannot recover 'em; and, I think, will scorn to beg 'em again.

Oliv. But, my life, have you taken the thousand guineas he left in my name out of the goldsmith's hands?

Ver. Ay, ay, they are removed to another goldsmith's.

Oliv. Ay, but, my soul, you had best have a care he find not where the money is: for his present wants (as I'm inform'd) are such as will make him inquisitive enough.

Ver. You say true, and he knows the man too: but I'll remove it to-morrow.

Oliv. To-morrow? O do not stay till to-morrow: go to-night, immediately.

Ver. Now I think on't, you advise well, and I will go presently.

Oliv. Presently! instantly! I will not let you stay a jot.

Ver. I will then, though I return not home till twelve.

Oliv. Nay, though not till morning, with all my heart: go, dearest, I am impatient till you are gone.—— [*Thrusts him out.*] So, I have at once now brought about those two grateful businesses, which all prudent women do together, secured money and pleasure, and now all interruptions of the last are removed. Go, husband, and come up, friend; just the buckets in the well; the absence of one brings the other; but I hope, like them too, they will not meet in the way, jostle, and clash together.

Enter FIDELIA, *and* MANLY *trending softly, and staying behind at some distance.*

So, you are come? but not the husband-bucket, I hope, again. Who's there? my dearest? [*Softly.*

Fid. My life——

Oliv. Right, right; where are thy lips? Here, take the dumb, and best welcomes, kisses and embraces; 'tis not a time for idle words. In a duel of love, as in others, parleying shews basely. Come, we are alone! and now the word is only satisfaction, and defend not thyself.

Man. How's this? how! she makes love like a devil in a play; and in this darkness, which conceals her angel's face, if I were apt to be afraid, I should think her a devil. [*Aside.*

Oliv. What, you traverse ground, young gentleman? [FIDELIA *avoiding her.*

Fid. I take breath only.

Man. Good Heav'ns! how was I deceived! [*Aside.*

Oliv. Nay, you are a coward; what, are you afraid of the fierceness of my love?

Fid. Yes, madam, lest its violence might presage its change; and I must needs be afraid you would leave me quickly, who could desert so brave a gentleman as Manly.

Oliv. O! name not his name; for in a time of stolen joys, as this is, the filthy name of husband were not a more allaying sound.

Man. There's some comfort yet. [*Aside.*

Fid. But did you not love him?

Oliv. Never. How could you think it?

Fid. Because he thought it, who is a man of that sense, nice discerning, and diffidency, and I should think it hard to deceive him.

Oliv. No: he that distrusts most the world, trusts most to himself, and is but the more easily deceived, because he thinks he cann't be deceived: his cunning is like the coward's sword, by which he is oftner worsted than defended.

Fid. Yet, sure, you used no common art to deceive him.

Oliv. I knew he loved his own singular moroseness so well, as to dote upon any copy of it; wherefore I feign'd an hatred to the world too, that he might love me in earnest: but, if it had been hard to deceive him, I'm sure t'were much harder to love him. A dogged, ill-manner'd——

Fid. D'ye hear her, sir? pray hear her. [*Aside to* MANLY.

Oliv. Surly, untractable, snarling brute! he! a mastiff-dog were as fit a thing to make a gallant of.

Man. Ay, a goat or monkey were fitter for thee. [*Aside.*

Fid. I must confess, for my part, (though my rival) I cannot but say he has a manly handsomeness in's face and mien.

Oliv. So has a Saracen in the sign.

Fid. Is proper and well made.

Oliv. As a dray-man.

Fid. Has wit.

Oliv. He rails at all mankind.

Fid. And undoubted courage.

Oliv. Like the hangman's, can murder a man when his hands are tied. He has cruelty indeed; which is no more courage than his railing is wit.

Man. Thus women, and men like women, are too hard for us, when they think we do not hear 'em; and reputation, like other mistresses, is never true to a man in his absence. [*Aside.*

Fid. He is——

Oliv. Pr'ythee no more of him; I thought I had satisfied you enough before, that he could never be a rival for you to apprehend; and you need not be more assured of my aversion to him, but by the last testimony of my love to you, which I am ready to give you. Come, my soul, this way—— [*Pulls* FIDELIA.

Fid. But, madam, what could make you dissemble love to him, when 'twas so hard a thing for you, and flatter his love to you?

Oliv. That which makes all the world flatter and dissemble, 'twas his money: I had a real passion for that. Yet I loved not that so well, as for it to take him; for, as soon as I had money, I hastened his departure: like a wife who, when she has made the most of a dying husband's breath, pulls away the pillow.

Man. Damn'd money! its master's potent rival still; and, like a saucy pimp, corrupts itself the mistress it procures for us! [*Aside.*

Oliv. But I did not think with you, my life, to pass my time in talking. Come hither, come; yet stay, till I have lock'd a door in the other room, that may chance to let us in some interruption; which reciting poets, or losing gamesters, fear not more than I at this time do. [*Exit* OLIVIA.

Fid. Well, I hope you are now satisfied, sir, and will be gone to think of your revenge?

Man. No, I am not satisfied, and must stay to be revenged.

Fid. How, sir? You'll use no violence to her, I hope, and forfeit your own life, to take away hers? That were no revenge.

Man. No, no, you need not fear: my revenge shall only be upon her honour, not her life.

Fid. How, sir? her honour? O heavens! consider, sir, she has no honour. D'ye call that revenge? Can you think of such a thing? But reflect, sir, how she hates and loaths you.

Man. Yes, so much she hates me, that it would be a revenge sufficient to make her accessary to my pleasure, and then let her know it.

Fid. No, sir, no; to be revenged on her now were to disappoint her. Pray, sir, let us be gone. [*Pulls* MANLY.

Man. Hold off. What, you are my rival then? and therefore you shall stay, and keep the door for me, whilst I go in for you: but, when I'm gone, if you dare to stir off from this very board, or breathe the least murmuring accent, I'll cut her throat first, and if you love her, you will not venture her life; nay, then I'll cut your throat too; and I know you love your own life at least.

Fid. But, sir, good sir—

Man. Not a word more, lest I begin my revenge on her, by killing you.

Fid. But are you sure 'tis revenge, that makes you do this? How can it be?

Man. Hist!

Fid. 'Tis a strange revenge indeed.

Man. If you make me stay, I shall keep my word, and begin with you.—No more.

[*Exit* MANLY, *at the same door* OLIVIA *went.*

Manet FIDELIA.

Fid. O Heavens! is there not punishment enough
In loving well, if you will have't a crime,
But you must add fresh torments daily to't,
And punish us like peevish rivals still,
Because we fain would find a heaven here?
But did there never any love like me,
That untried tortures you must find me out?
Others, at worst, you force to kill themselves;
But I must be self-murd'ress of my love,
Yet will not grant me power to end my life,
My cruel life; for, when a lover's hopes
Are dead and gone, life is unmerciful.

[*Sits down, and weeps.*

Enter MANLY *to her.*

Man. I have thought better on't; I must not discover myself now; I am without witnesses: for if I barely would publish it, she would deny it with as much impudence, as she would act it again with this young fellow here.—Where are you?

Fid. Here——oh——now I suppose we may be gone.

Man. I will, but not you; you must stay, and act the second part of a lover: that is, talk kindness to her.

Fid. Not I, sir.

Man. No disputing, sir, you must: 'tis necessary to my design of coming again to-morrow night.

Fid. What, can you come again then hither?

Man. Yes, and you must make the appointment, and an apology for your leaving her so soon; for I have said not a word to her, but have kept your counsel, as I expect you should do mine: do this faithfully, and I promise you here you shall run my fortune still, and we will never part as long as we live; but, if you do not do it, expect not to live.

Fid. 'Tis hard, sir; but such a consideration will make it easier: you won't forget your promise, sir?

Man. No, by heavens. But I hear her coming. [*Exit.*

Enter OLIVIA *to* FIDELIA.

Oliv. Where is my life? run from me already! you do not love me, dearest; nay, you are angry with me; for you would not so much as speak a kind word to me within: What was the reason?

Fid. I was transported too much.

Oliv. That's kind; but come, my soul, what make you here? let us go in again, we may be surprised in this room, 'tis so near the stairs.

Fid. No, we shall hear the better here, if any body should come up.

Oliv. Nay, I assure you, we shall be secure enough within: Come, come———

Fid. I am sick, and troubled with a sudden dizziness; cannot stir yet.

Oliv. Come, I have spirits within.

Fid. Oh!——don't you hear a noise, madam?

Oliv. No, no, there is none: Come, come. [*Pulls her.*

Fid. Indeed there is; and I love you so much, I must have a care of your honour, if you won't, and go; but to come to you to-morrow night, if you please.

Oliv. With all my soul; but you must not go yet: Come, pr'ythee.

Fid. Oh!——I am now sicker, and am afraid of one of my fits.

Oliv. What fits?

Fid. Of the falling sickness: and I lie generally an hour in a trance; therefore, pray consider your honour, for the sake of my love, and let me go, that I may return to you often.

Oliv. But will you be sure then to come to-morrow night?

Fid. Yes.

Oliv. Swear.

Fid. By our past kindness.

Oliv. Well, go your ways then, if you will, you naughty creature, you. [*Exit* FIDELIA.] These young lovers, with their fears and modesty, make themselves as bad as old ones to us; and I apprehend their bashfulness more than their tattling.

FIDELIA *returns.*

Fid. O, madam, we're undone! there was a gentleman upon the stairs, coming up with a candle; which made me retire. Look you, here he comes!

Enter VERNISH, *and his Man with a light.*

Oliv. How! my husband! Oh, undone indeed! —This way. [*Exit.*

Ver. Ha! You shall not escape me so, sir. [*Stops* FIDELIA.

Fid. O heavens! more fears, plagues, and torments yet in store! [*Aside.*

Ver. Come, sir, I guess what your business was here; but this must be your business now. Draw. [*Draws.*

Fid. Sir———

Ver. No expostulations: I shall not care to hear of't. Draw.

Fid. Good sir.

Ver. How, you rascal! not courage to draw, yet durst do me the greatest injury in the world? Thy cowardice shall not save thy life. [*Offers to run at* FIDELIA.

Fid. O hold, sir, and send but your servant down, and I'll satisfy you, sir, I could not injure you as you imagine.

Ver. Leave the light, and be gone. [*Exit Serv.*] Now, quickly, sir, what you have to say, or——

Fid. I am a woman, sir, a very unfortunate woman.

Ver. How! A very handsome woman, I'm sure then: Here are witnesses of't too, I confess—— [*Pulls off her peruke, and feels her breasts.*] Well, I'm glad to find the tables turn'd, my wife in more danger of cuckolding than I was. [*Aside.*

Fid. Now, sir, I hope you are so much a man of honour as to let me go, now I have satisfied you, sir.

Ver. When you have satisfied me, madam, I will.

Fid. I hope, sir, you are too much a gentleman to urge these secrets from a woman which concern her honour: You may guess my misfortune to be love, by my disguise; but a pair of breeches could not wrong you, sir.

Ver. I may believe love has changed your outside, which could not wrong me; but why did my wife run away?

Fid. I know not, sir; perhaps because she would not be forced to discover me to you, or to guide me from your suspicions, that you might not discover me yourself; which ungentleman-like curiosity I hope you will cease to have, and let me go.

Ver. Well, madam, if I must not know who you are, 'twill suffice for me only to know certainly what you are, which you must not deny me. Come, there is a bed within, the proper racks for lovers; and, if you are a woman, there you can keep no secrets; you'll tell me there all unask'd. Come. [*Pulls her.*

Fid. Oh! what d'ye mean? Help, oh———

Ver. I'll show you; but 'tis in vain to cry out: no one dares help you, for I am lord here.

Fid. Tyrant here; but if you are master of this house, which I have taken for a sanctuary, do not violate it yourself.

Ver. No, I'll preserve you here, and nothing shall hurt you, and will be as true to you as your disguise; but you must trust me then. Come, come.

Fid. Oh! oh! rather than you should drag me to a deed so horrid and so shameful, I'll die here a thousand deaths; but you do not look like a ravisher, sir.

Ver. Nor you like one would put me to't; but if you will——

Fid. Oh! oh! help! help!——

Enter Servant.

Ver. You saucy rascal, how durst you come in, when you heard a woman squeak? that should have been your cue to shut the door.

Serv. I come, sir, to let you know, the alderman, coming home immediately after you were at his house, has sent his cashier with the money, according to your note.

Ver. Damn his money! Money never came to any sure unseasonably till now. Bid him stay.

Serv. He says he cannot a moment.

Ver. Receive it you then.

Serv. He says he must have your receipt for it: he is in haste, for I hear him coming up, sir.

Ver. Damn him! Help me in here then with this dishonourer of my family.

Fid. Oh! oh!

Serv. You say she is a woman, sir.

Ver. No matter, sir; must you prate?

Fid. Oh Heavens! is there——

[*They thrust her in, and lock the door.*

Ver. Stay there, my prisoner; you have a short reprieve.

I'll fetch the gold, and that she cann't resist;
For with a full hand 'tis we ravish best.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ELIZA'S *Lodgings.*

Enter OLIVIA *and* ELIZA.

Oliv. Ah, cousin, nothing troubles me, but that I have given the malicious world its revenge, and reason now to talk as freely of me as I used to do of it.

Eliz. Faith, then let not that trouble you; for, to be plain, cousin, the world cannot talk worse of you than it did before.

Oliv. How, cousin? I'd have you to know, before this *faux pas*, this trip of mine, the world could not talk of me.

Eliz. Only that you mind other people's actions so much, that you take no care of your own, but to hide 'em; that, like a thief, because you know yourself most guilty, you impeach your fellow-criminals first, to clear yourself.

Oliv. O wicked world!

Eliz. That you pretend an aversion to all mankind in public, only that their wives and mistresses may not be jealous, and hinder you of their conversation in private.

Oliv. Base world!

Eliz. That abroad you fasten quarrels upon innocent men, for talking of you, only to bring them to ask you pardon at home, and to become dear friends with them, who were hardly your acquaintance before.

Oliv. Abominable world!

Eliz. That you condemn the obscenity of modern plays, only that you may not be censured for never missing the most obscene of the old ones.

Oliv. Damned world!

Eliz. That you deface the nudities of pictures and little statues, only because they are not real.

Oliv. O, fie, fie, fie! hideous, hideous, cousin! the obscenity of their censures makes me blush.

Eliz. The truth of them, the naughty world would say now.

Enter LETTICE *hastily.*

Let. O! madam, here is that gentleman coming up, who now, you say, is my master.

Oliv. O, cousin, whither shall I run? protect me, or——

[OLIVIA *runs away, and stands at a distance.*

Enter VERNISH.

Ver. Nay, nay, come—

Oliv. O, sir, forgive me.

Ver. Yes, yes, I can forgive you, being alone in the dark with a woman in man's cloaths; but have a care of man in women's cloaths.

Oliv. What does he mean? he dissembles, only to get me into his power; or has my dear friend made him believe he was a woman? My husband may be deceived by him, but I'm sure I was not. [*Aside.*

Ver. Come, come, you need not have lain out of your house for this; but perhaps you were afraid, when I was warm with suspicions, you must have discovered who she was: And pr'ythee, may I not know it?

Oliv. She was!—I hope he has been deceived: and, since my lover has played the card, I must not renounce. [*Aside.*

Ver. Come, what's the matter with thee? If I must not know who she is, I'm satisfied without. Come hither.

Oliv. Sure you do know her; she has told you herself, I suppose.

Ver. No, I might have known her better, but that I was interrupted by the goldsmith, you know, and was forced to lock her into your chamber, to keep her from his sight; but, when I returned, I found she was got away, by tying the window-curtains to the balcony, by which she slid down into the street: for, you must know, I jested with her, and made her believe I'd ravish her; which she apprehended, it seems, in earnest.

Oliv. Then she got from you?

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. And is quite gone?

Ver. Yes.

Oliv. I'm glad on't—otherwise you had ravished her, sir. But how darest thou go so far, as to make her believe you would ravish her? Let me understand that, sir. What! there's guilt in your face; you blush too: nay, then you did ravish her, you did, you base fellow. What, ravish a woman in the first month of her marriage! 'Tis a double injury to me, thou base ungrateful man; wrong my bed already, villain! I could tear out those false eyes, barbarous, unworthy wretch!

Eliz. So, so!—

Ver. Pr'ythee hear, my dear.

Oliv. I will never hear you, my plague, my torment.

Ver. I swear—pr'ythee hear me.

Oliv. I have heard already too many of your false oaths and vows, especially your last in the church. O wicked man! And wretched woman that I was! I wish I had then sunk down into a grave, rather than to have given you my hand, to be led to your loathsome bed. Oh—oh—

[*Seems to weep.*

Ver. So; very fine! just a marriage-quarrel! which, though it generally begins by the wife's fault, yet, in the conclusion, it becomes the husband's; and whosoever offends at first, he only is sure to ask pardon at last. My dear——

Oliv. My devil——

Ver. Come, pr'ythee be appeased, and go home; I have bespoken our supper betimes; for I could not eat till I found you. Go, I'll give you all kind of satisfactions; and one which uses to be a reconciling one, two hundred of those guineas I received last night, to do what you will with.

Oliv. What, would you pay me for being your bawd?

Ver. Nay, pr'ythee no more; go and I'll thoroughly satisfy you when I come home; and then, too, we will have a fit of laughter at Manly, whom I am going to find at the Cock in Bow-street, where I hear he dined. Go, dearest, go home.

Eliz. A very pretty turn, indeed, this! [*Aside.*

Ver. Now, cousin, since by my wife I have that honour and privilege of calling you so, I have something to beg of you too; which is, not to take notice of our marriage to any whatever, yet a while, for some reasons very important to me: and next, that you will do my wife the honour to go home with her, and me the favour, to use that power you have with her in our reconcilement.

Eliz. That I dare promise, sir, will be no hard matter. Your servant. [*Exit* VERNISH.] Well, cousin, this I confess was seasonable hypocrisy; you were the better for't.

Oliv. What hypocrisy?

Eliz. Why, this last deceit of your husband was lawful, since in your own defence.

Oliv. What deceit? I'd have you to know, I never deceived my husband.

Eliz. You do not understand me, sure; I say, this was an honest come-off, and a good one: but 'twas a sign your gallant had had enough of your conversation, since he could so dexterously cheat your husband in passing for a woman.

Oliv. What d'ye mean? once more with my gallant, and passing for a woman!

Eliz. What do you mean! you see your husband took him for a woman.

Oliv. Whom?

Eliz. Hey-day! why, the man he found you with, for whom last night you were so much afraid, and who, you told me——

Oliv. Lord, you rave sure!

Eliz. Why, did not you tell me last night——

Oliv. I know not what I might tell you last night, in a fright.

Eliz. Ay, what was that fright for? for a woman? Besides, were you not afraid to see your husband just now? I warrant, only for having been found with a woman? nay, did you not just now too own your false step, or trip, as you call'd it? which was with a woman too! Fie, this fooling is so insipid, 'tis offensive.

Oliv. And fooling with my honour will be more offensive. Did you not hear my husband say, he found me with a woman in man's clothes? And d'ye think he does not know a man from a woman?

Eliz Not so well, I'm sure, as you do; therefore I'd rather take your word.

Oliv. What, you grow scurrilous, and are, I find, more censorious than the world! I must have a care of you, I see.

Eliz. No, you need not fear yet—I'll keep your secret.

Oliv. My secret! I'd have you to know, I have no need of confidantes, though you value yourself upon being a good one.

Eliz. O admirable confidence! you show more in denying your wickedness than other people in glorying in't.

Oliv. Confidence to me! to me such language! nay, then I'll never see your face again. I'll quarrel with her, that people may never believe I was in her power; but take for malice all the truth she may speak against me. [*Aside.*] Lettice, where are you? let us be gone from this censorious ill woman.

Eliz. Nay, thou shalt stay a little, to damn thyself quite. [*Aside.*] One word first: Pray, madam, can you swear that person whom your husband found with you——

Oliv. Swear! ay, that whosoever 'twas that stole up, unknown, into my room, when 'twas dark, I know not whether man or woman, by heavens, by all that's good; or, may I never more have joys here, or in the other world: nay, may I eternally——

Eliz. Be damn'd. So, so, you are damn'd enough already by your oaths: and I enough confirm'd; and now you may please to be gone. Yet take this advice with you, in this plain-dealing age, to leave off forswearing yourself; for, when people hardly think the better of a woman for her real modesty, why should you put that great constraint upon yourself to feign it?

Oliv. O hideous! hideous advice! Let us go out of the hearing of it. She will spoil us, Lettice.

[*Exeunt* OLIV. *and* LET. *at one door, and* ELIZ. *at the other.*

The Scene changes to the Cock in Bow-Street. A table and bottles.

MANLY *and* FIDELIA.

Man. How! saved her honour, by making her husband believe you were a woman! 'Twas well, but hard enough to do, sure.

Fid. We were interrupted before he could contradict me.

Man. But cann't you tell me, d'ye say, what kind of man he was?

Fid. I was so frightened, I confess, I can give no other account of him, but that he was pretty tall, round-faced, and one I'm sure I ne'er had seen before.

Man. But she, you say, made you swear to return to-night?

Fid. But I have since sworn, never to go near her again; for the husband would murder me, or worse, if he caught me again.

Man. No, I will go with you, and defend you to-night, and then I'll swear too, never to go near her again.

Fid. Nay, indeed, sir, I will not go, to be accessary to your death too: besides, what should you go again, sir, for?

Man. No disputing, or advice, sir, you have reason to know I am unalterable. Go, therefore, presently, and write her a note to inquire if her assignation with you holds; and if not to be at her own house, where else? and be importunate to gain admittance to her to-night: let your messenger, ere he deliver your letter, inquire first, if her husband be gone out. Go, 'tis now almost six of the clock; I expect you back here before seven, with leave to see her then. Go, do this dexterously, and expect the performance of my last night's promise, never to part with you.

Fid. Ay, sir: but will you be sure to remember that?

Man. Did I ever break my word? Go; no more replies, or doubts. [*Exit* FIDELIA.

Enter FREEMAN *to* MANLY.

Where hast thou been?

Free. In the next room, with my Lord Plausible and Novel.

Man. Ay, we came hither, because 'twas a private house; but with thee indeed no house can be private, for thou hast that pretty quality of the familiar fops of the town, who, in an eating-house, always keep company with all people in't, but those they came with.

Free. I went into their room, but to keep them, and my own fool the 'squire, out of your room; but you shall be peevish now, because you have no money. But why the devil won't you write to those we were speaking of? Since your modesty, or your spirit, will not suffer you to speak to 'em, to lend you money, why won't you try 'em at least that way?

Man. Because I know 'em already, and can bear want better than denials; nay, than obligations.

Free. Deny you they cannot: all of 'em have been your intimate friends.

Man. No, they have been people only I have obliged particularly.

Free. Very well; therefore you ought to go to 'em the rather, sure.

Man. No, no; those you have obliged most, most certainly avoid you, when you can oblige 'em no longer: and they take your visits like so many duns; friends, like mistresses, are avoided, for obligations past.

Free. Pshaw! but most of 'em are your relations; men of great fortune and honour.

Man. Yes; but relations have so much honour, as to think poverty taints the blood; and disown their wanting kindred: believing, I suppose, that, as riches at first make a gentleman, the want of 'em degrades him. But, damn 'em, now I am poor, I'll anticipate their contempt, and disown them.

Free. But you have many a female acquaintance, whom you have been liberal to, who may have a heart to refund to you a little, if you would ask it: they are not all Olivias.

Man. Damn thee! how couldst thou think of such a thing? I would as soon rob my footman of his wages: besides, 'twere in vain too: for a wench is like a box in an ordinary, receives all people's money easily; but there's no getting, nay shaking any out again; and he that fills it, is surest never to keep the key.

Free. Well, but, noble captain, would you make me believe that you, who know half the town, have so many friends, and have obliged so many, cann't borrow fifty or an hundred pounds?

Man. Why, noble lieutenant, you, who know all the town, and call all you know friends, methinks should not wonder at it; since you find ingratitude too; for how many lords' families (though descended from blacksmiths or tinkers) hast thou call'd great and illustrious? how many ill tables call'd good eating? how many noisy coxcombs, wits? how many pert, cocking cowards, stout? how many tawdry, affected rogues, well dress'd? how many perukes admired? and how many ill verses applauded? and yet canst not borrow a shilling; dost thou expect I, who always spoke truth, should?

Free. Nay, now you think you have paid me: But, hark you, captain, I have heard of a thing call'd grinning honour, but never of starving honour.

Man. Well, but it has been the fate of some brave men—and if they won't give me a ship again, I can go starve any where, with a musket on my shoulder.

Free. Give you a ship! why, you will not solicit it?

Man. If I have not solicited it by my services, I know no other way.

Free. Your servant, sir: nay, then, I'm satisfied I must solicit my widow the closer, and run the desperate fortune of matrimony on shore. [*Exit.*

Enter to MANLY, VERNISH.

Man. How!—Nay, here is a friend indeed; and he that has him in his arms can know no wants. [*Embraces* VERNISH.

Ver. Dear sir! and he that is in your arms is secure from all fears whatever; nay, our nation is secure, by your defeat at sea; and the Dutch, that fought against you, have proved enemies to themselves only, in bringing you back to us.

Man. Fie, fie! this from a friend! and yet

from any other 'twere insufferable: I thought I should never have taken any thing ill from you.

Ver. A friend's privilege is to speak his mind, though it be taken ill.

Man. But your tongue need not tell me you think too well of me: I have found it from your heart, which spoke in actions, your unalterable heart.—But Olivia is false, my friend; which I suppose is no news to you.

Ver. He's in the right on't. [*Aside.*

Man. But couldst thou not keep her true to me?

Ver. Not for my heart, sir.

Man. But could you not perceive it at all, before I went? Could she so deceive us both?

Ver. I must confess, the first time I knew it was three days after your departure, when she received the money you had left in Lombard-street, in her name: and her tears did not hinder her, it seems, from counting that.—You would trust her with all, like a true, generous lover?

Man. And she, like a mean, jilting—

Ver. Traitorous—

Man. Base—

Ver. Damn'd—

Man. Covetous—

Ver. Mercenary whore.——I can hardly hold from laughing. [*Aside.*

Man. Ay, a mercenary whore indeed; for she made me pay her before I lay with her.

Ver. How! Why, have you lain with her?

Man. Ay, ay.

Ver. Nay, she deserves you should report it at least, though you have not.

Man. Report it! By Heaven, 'tis true.

Ver. How! sure not.

Man. I do not use to lie, nor you to doubt me.

Ver. When?

Man. Last night, about seven or eight o'clock.

Ver. Ha!—Now I remember, I thought she spoke as if she expected some other, rather than me.—A confounded whore indeed! [*Aside.*

Man. But what, thou wonderest at it! nay, you seem to be angry too.

Ver. I cannot but be enraged against her, for her usage of you—damn'd, infamous, common jade.

Man. Nay, her cuckold, who first cuckolded me in my money, shall not laugh all himself; we will do him reason, sha'n't we?

Ver. Ay, ay.

Man. But thou dost not, for so great a friend, take pleasure enough in your friend's revenge, methinks.

Ver. Yes, yes; I'm glad to know it, since you have lain with her.

Man. Thou canst not tell me who that rascal her cuckold is?

Ver. No.

Man. She would keep it from you, I suppose.

Ver. Yes, yes.

Man. Thou wouldst laugh, if thou knewest but all the circumstances of my having her.—Come, I'll tell thee.

Ver. Damn her! I care not to hear any more of her.

Man. Faith thou shalt. You must know——

Enter FREEMAN *backwards, endeavouring to keep out* NOVEL, *Lord* PLAUSIBLE, JERRY, *and* OLDFOX, *who all press in upon him.*

Free. I tell you, he has a wench with him, and would be private.

Man. Damn'em! a man cann't open a bottle in these eating-houses, but presently you have these impudent, intruding, buzzing flies and insects in your glass.—Well, I'll tell thee all anon. In the mean time, pr'ythee go to her, but not from me, and try if you can get her to lend me but an hundred pounds of my money, to supply my present wants; for I suppose there is no recovering any of it by law.

Ver. Not any: think not of it: nor by this way neither.

Man. Go try, at least.

Ver. I'll go; but I can satisfy you beforehand, it will be to no purpose: You'll no more find a refunding wench——

Man. Than a refunding lawyer: indeed, their fees, alike, scarce ever return: However, try her, put it to her.

Ver. Ay, ay, I'll try her, put it to her home, with a vengeance. [*Exit* VERNISH.

Manent cæteri.

Nov. Nay, you shall be our judge, Manly. Come, major, I'll speak it to your teeth: If people provoke me to say bitter things to their faces, they must take what follows; though, like my Lord Plausible, I'd rather do it civilly behind their backs.

Man. Nay, thou art a dangerous rogue, I've heard, behind a man's back.

L. Plaus. You wrong him sure, noble captain; he would do a man no more harm behind his back than to his face.

Free. I am of my lord's mind.

Man. Yes; a fool, like a coward, is the more to be fear'd behind a man's back; more than a witty man; for, as a coward is more bloody than a brave man, a fool is more malicious than a man of wit.

Nov. A fool, tar—a fool!—Nay, thou art a brave sea-judge of wit—A fool!—Pr'ythee, when did you ever find me want something to say, as you do often?

Man. Nay, I confess, thou art always talking, roaring, or making a noise; that I'll say for thee.

Nov. Well; and is talking a sign of a fool?

Man. Yes; always talking, especially too if it be loud and fast, is the sign of a fool.

Nov. Psha! talking is like fencing, the quicker the better: run 'em down, run 'em down; no matter for parrying: push on still, sa, sa, sa; no matter whether you argue in form, push in guard, or no.

Man. Or hit or no: I think thou always talk'st without thinking, Novel.

Nov. Ay, ay; studied play's the worse, to follow the allegory, as the old pedant says.

Old. A young fop!

Man. I ever thought the man of most wit had

been like him of most money, who has no vanity in shewing it every where; whilst the beggarly pusher of his fortune has all he has about him still, only to shew.

Nov. Well, sir, and makes a very pretty show in the world, let me tell you; nay, a better than your close hunks.—A pox! give me ready money in play; what care I for a man's reputation? What are we the better for your substantial thrifty curmudgeon in wit, sir?

Old. Thou art a profuse young rogue indeed.

Nov. So much for talking, which I think I have proved a mark of wit: and so is railing, roaring, and making a noise; for railing is satire, you know, and roaring and making a noise, humour.

Enter to them FIDELIA, *taking* MANLY *aside, and shewing him a Paper.*

Fid. The hour is betwixt seven and eight exactly: 'tis now half an hour after six.

Man. Well, go then to the piazza, and wait for me: as soon as it is quite dark, I'll be with you: I must stay here yet a while for my friend. —But is railing satire, Novel? [*Exit* FIDELIA.

Free. And roaring and making a noise, humour?

Nov. What, won't you confess there's humour in roaring and making a noise?

Free. No.

Nov. Nor in cutting napkins and hangings?

Man. No, sure.

Nov. Dull fops!

Old. O rogue, rogue, insipid rogue!—Nay, gentlemen, allow him those things for wit; for his parts lie only that way.

Nov. Peace, old fool, I wonder not at thee; but that young fellows should be so dull as to say, there's no humour in making a noise, and breaking windows,—I tell you, there's wit and humour too in both; and a wit is as well known by his frolic as by his simile.

Old. Poor rogue! there's your modern wit for you! wit and humour in breaking of windows! There's mischief, if you will, but no wit or humour.

Nov. Pr'ythee, pr'ythee, peace, old fool. I tell you, where there is mischief, there's wit. Don't we esteem the monkey a wit amongst beasts, only because he's mischievous? And, let me tell you, as good nature is the sign of a fool, being mischievous is the sign of a wit.

Old. O rogue, rogue! pretend to be a wit, by doing mischief and railing!

Nov. Why, thou, old fool, hast no other pretence to the name of a wit, but by railing at new plays.

Old. Thou, by railing at that facetious, noble way of wit, quibbling.

Nov. Thou call'st thy dulness gravity, and thy dozing thinking.

Old. You, sir, your dulness spleen; and you talk much, and say nothing.

Nov. Thou read'st much, and understand'st nothing, sir.

Old. You laugh aloud, and break no jest.

Nov. You rail, and nobody hangs himself; and thou hast nothing of the satyr but in thy face.

Old. And you have no jest but your face, sir.

Nov. Thou art a fool, with a bad memory.

Man. Come, a pox on you both! you have done like wits now; for you wits, when you quarrel, never give over till ye prove one another fools.

Nov. And you fools have never any occasion of laughing at us wits, but when we quarrel: therefore let us be friends, Oldfox.

Man. They are such wits as thou art, who make the name of a wit as scandalous as that of bully; and signify a loud laughing, talking, incorrigible coxcomb; as bully, a roaring, harden'd coward.

Free. And one would have his noise and laughter pass for wit, as t'other his huffing and blustering for courage.

Enter VERNISH.

Man. Gentlemen, with your leave, here is one I would speak with; and I have nothing to say to you. [*Puts them out of the room.*

Manent MANLY, VERNISH.

Ver. I told you 'twas in vain to think of getting money out of her: She says, if a shilling would do it, she would not save you from starving or hanging, or, what you'd think worse, begging or flattering; and rails so at you, one would not think you had lain with her.

Man. O, friend, never trust for that matter, a woman's railing; for she is no less a dissembler in her hatred than her love; and as her fondness of her husband is a sign he's a cuckold, her railing at another man is a sign she lies with him.

Ver. He's in the right on't: I know not what to trust to. [*Aside.*

Man. But you did not take any notice of it to her, I hope?

Ver. So!—Sure he is afraid I should have disproved him, by an enquiry of her.—All may be well yet. [*Aside.*

Man. What hast thou in thy head, that makes thee seem so unquiet?

Ver. Only this base, impudent woman's falseness: I cannot put her out of my head.

Man. O, my dear friend! be not you too sensible of my wrongs; for then I shall feel 'em too, with more pain, and think 'em insufferable.—Damn her, her money, and that ill-natured whore too, Fortune herself!—But if thou wouldst ease a little my present trouble, pr'ythee go to borrow me, somewhere else, some money: I can trouble thee.

Ver. You trouble me indeed, most sensibly, when you command me any thing I cannot do: I have lately lost a great deal of money at play, more than I can yet pay; so that not only my money, but my credit too is gone, and know not where to borrow, but could rob a church for you. —Yet would rather end your wants, by cutting your throat. [*Aside.*

Man. Nay then, I doubly feel my poverty, since I'm incapable of supplying thee.

[*Embraces* VERNISH.

Ver. But, methinks, she that granted you the last favour (as they call it) should not deny you any thing——

Nov. Hey, tarpaulin, have you done?

[NOVEL *looks in, and retires again.*

Ver. I understand not that point of kindness, I confess.

Man. No, thou dost not understand it; and I have not time to let you know all now; for these fools, you see, will interrupt us; but anon, at supper, we'll laugh at leisure together at Olivia's cuckold, who took a young fellow that goes between his wife and me for a woman.

Ver. Ha!

Man. Senseless, easy rascal! 'twas no wonder she chose him for a husband; but she thought him, I thank her, fitter than me for that blind, bearing office.

Ver. I could not be deceived in that long woman's hair, tied up behind, nor those infallible proofs, her pouting, swelling breasts; I have handled too many sure, not to know 'em. [*Aside.*

Man. What, you wonder the fellow could be such a blind coxcomb?

Ver. Yes, yes——

[NOVEL *looks in again, and retires.*

Nov. Nay, pr'ythee, come to us, Manly: gad, all the fine things one says in their company are lost without thee.

Man. Away, fop! I'm busy yet.—You see we cannot talk here at our ease; besides, I must be gone immediately, in order to meeting with Olivia again to-night.

Ver. To-night! it cannot be, sure.

Man. I had an appointment just now from her.

Ver. For what time?

Man. At half an hour after seven precisely.

Ver. Don't you apprehend the husband?

Man. He! snivelling gull! he a thing to be feared! a husband the tamest of creatures.

Ver. Very fine! [*Aside.*

Man. But, pr'ythee, in the mean time, go try to get me some money. Though thou art too modest to borrow for thyself, thou canst do any thing for me, I know. Go; for I must be gone to Olivia: Go, and meet me here anon.—Freeman, where are you? [*Exit* MANLY.

Manet VERNISH.

Ver. Ay, I'll meet with you, I warrant; but it shall be at Olivia's.—Sure it cannot be; she denies it so calmly; and with that honest, modest assurance, it cann't be true.—And he does not use to lie—but belying a woman, when she won't be kind, is the only lie a brave man will least scruple.—But then the woman in man's clothes, whom he calls a man!—well, but, by her breasts, I know her to be a woman.—But then, again, his appointment from her to meet with him to-night! I am distracted more with doubt than jealousy. Well, I have no way to disabuse or revenge myself, but by going home immediately, putting on a riding suit, and pretending to my wife, the same business which carried me out of town last requires me again to go post to Oxford to-night; then, if the appointment he boasts of be true, it's sure to hold, and I shall have an opportunity either of clearing her, or revenging myself on both.—Perhaps she is his wench, of an old date, and I am his cully, whilst I think him mine; and he has seem'd to make his wench rich, only that I might take her off his hands; or, if he has but lately lain with her, he must needs discover, by her, my treachery to him; which I'm sure he will revenge with my death, and which I must prevent with his, if it were only but for fear of his too just reproaches; for, I must confess, I never had till now any excuse, but that of interest, for doing ill to him. [*Exit* VERNISH.

Re-enter MANLY *and* FREEMAN.

Man. Come hither; only, I say, be sure you mistake not the time: you know the house exactly where Olivia lodges; 'tis just hard by.

Free. Yes, yes.

Man. Well then, bring 'em all, I say, thither, and all you know that may be then in the house; for the more witnesses I have of her infamy, the greater will be my revenge; and be sure you come straight up to her chamber, without more ado. Here, take the watch: you see 'tis above a quarter past seven; be there in half an hour exactly.

Free. You need not doubt my diligence or dexterity; I am an old scourer, and can naturally beat up a wench's quarters that won't be civil. Sha'n't we break her windows too?

Man. No, no; be punctual only. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Widow BLACKACRE, *and two Knights of the Post—a Waiter with Wine.*

Wid. Sweet heart, are you sure the door was shut close, that none of those roisters saw us come in?

Wait. Yes, mistress; and you shall have a privater room above instantly. [*Exit Waiter.*

Wid. You are safe enough, gentlemen; for I have been private in this house ere now, upon other occasions, when I was something younger. Come, gentlemen; in short, I leave my business to your care and fidelity: and so, here's to you.

1 *Knight.* We are ungrateful rogues, if we should not be honest to you; for we have had a great deal of your money.

Wid. And you have done me many a good job for't: and so, here's to you again.

2 *Knight.* Why, we have been perjured but six times for you.

1 *Knight.* Forged but four deeds, with your husband's last deed of gift.

2 *Knight.* And but three wills.

1 *Knight.* And counterfeited hands and seals to some six bonds: I think that's all, brother?

Wid. Ay, that's all, gentlemen: and so, here's to you again.

2 *Knight.* Nay, 'twould do one's heart good to be forsworn for you: you have a conscience in your ways, and pay us well.

1 *Knight.* You are in the right on't, brother; one would be damn'd for her, with all one's heart.

2 *Knight.* But there are rogues, who make us

forsworn for them, and, when we come to be paid, they'll be forsworn too, and not pay us our wages, which they promised with oaths sufficient.

1 *Knight.* Ay; a great lawyer, that shall be nameless, bilk'd me too.

Wid. That was hard, methinks, that a lawyer should use gentlemen witnesses no better.

1 *Knight.* A lawyer! d'ye wonder a lawyer should do't? I was bilk'd by a reverend divine, that preaches twice on Sundays, and prays half an hour still before dinner.

Wid. How! a conscientious divine, and not pay people for damning themselves! Sure, then, for all his talking, he does not believe damnation.—But come, to our business: Pray be sure to imitate exactly the flourish at the end of this name. [*Pulls out a deed or two.*

1 *Knight.* O, he's the best in England at untangling a flourish, madam.

Wid. And let not the seal be a jot bigger: observe well the dash too at the end of this name.

2 *Knight.* I warrant you, madam.

Wid. Well, these and many other shifts poor widows are put to sometimes; for every body would be riding a widow, as they say, and breaking into her jointure: they think marrying a widow an easy business, like leaping the hedge where another has gone over before: a widow is a mere gap, a gap with them.

Enter to them Major OLDFOX, *with two Waiters.*

[*The Knights of the Post huddle up their writings.*] What, he here!—Go then, go, my hearts; you have your instructions.

[*Exeunt Knights of the Post.*

Old. Come, madam, to be plain with you, I'll be fobb'd off no longer.—I'll bind her and gag her, but she shall hear me.—[*Aside.*]—Look you, friends, there's the money I promised you; and now do you what you promised me: here are my garters, and here's a gag.—You shall be acquainted with my parts, lady, you shall.

Wid. Acquainted with your parts!—A rape! a rape!—What, will you ravish me?

[*The Waiters tie her to the chair, and gag her, and exeunt.*

Old. Yes, lady, I will ravish you; but it shall be through the ear, lady, the ear only, with my well-penn'd acrostics.

Enter to them FREEMAN, JERRY BLACKACRE, *three Bailiffs, a Constable, and his Assistants, with the two Knights of the Post.*

What, shall I never read my things undisturb'd again?

Jer. O la!—My mother bound hand and foot, and gaping, as if she rose before her time to-day!

Free. What means this, Oldfox?—But I'll release you from him: You shall be no man's prisoner but mine.—Bailiffs, execute your writ.

[FREEMAN *unties her.*

Old. Nay then, I'll be gone, for fear of being bail, and paying her debts, without being her husband. [*Exit* OLDFOX.

1*st Bail.* We arrest you in the king's name, at the suit of Mr Freeman, guardian to Jeremiah Blackacre, Esq., in an action of ten thousand pounds.

Wid. How, how! in a choak-bail action!—What, and the pen-and-ink gentlemen taken too?—Have you confessed, you rogues?

1 *Knight.* We needed not to confess; for the bailiffs dogg'd us hither to the very door, and overheard all that you and we said.

Wid. Undone, undone then! No man was ever too hard for me till now.—Jerry, child, wilt thou vex again the womb that bore thee?

Jer. Ay, for bearing me before wedlock, as you say: But I'll teach you to call a Blackacre a bastard, though you were never so much my mother.

Wid. Well, I'm undone.—Not one trick left? no law-meush imaginable?—[*Aside.*] Cruel sir, a word with you, I pray.

Free. In vain, madam; for you have no other way to release yourself but by the bonds of matrimony.

Wid. How, sir, how!—that were but to sue out an *habeas corpus*, for a removal from one prison to another.—Matrimony!

Free. Well, bailiffs, away with her.

Wid. O, stay, sir! Can you be so cruel as to bring me under covert-baron again, and put it out of my power to sue in my own name? Matrimony to a woman is worse than excommunication, in depriving her of the benefit of the law; and I would rather be deprived of life.—But, hark you, sir, I am contented you should hold and enjoy my person by lease or patent; but not by the spiritual patent, call'd a licence; that is, to have the privileges of a husband, without the dominion; that is, *durante beneplacito*: in consideration of which, I will, out of my jointure, secure you an annuity of three hundred pounds a-year, and pay your debts; and that's all you younger brothers desire to marry a widow for, I'm sure.

Free. Well, widow, if——

Jer. What, I hope, bully-guardian, you are not making agreements without me?

Free. No, no.—First, widow, you must say no more that he is the son of a whore: have a care of that: and then, he must have a settled exhibition of forty pounds a-year, and a nag of assizes, kept by you, but not upon the common; and have free ingress, egress, and regress, to and from your maid's garret.

Wid. Well, I can grant all that too.

Jer. Ay, ay; fair words butter no cabbage:—But, guardian, make her sign, sign and seal; for otherwise, if you knew her as well as I, you would not trust her word for a farthing.

Free. I warrant thee, squire.—Well, widow, since thou art so generous, I will be generous too; and if you'll secure me four hundred pounds a-year, but during your life, and pay my debts, (not above a thousand pounds,) I'll bate you your person, to dispose of as you please.

Wid. Have a care, sir; a settlement without a consideration is void in the law: You must do something for't.

Free. Pr'ythee then let the settlement on me be call'd alimony; and the consideration, our separation.—Come; my lawyer, with writings ready drawn, is within, and in haste. Come.

Wid. But what, no other kind of consideration, Mr Freeman?—Well, a widow, I see, is a kind of sinecure, by custom of which the unconscionable incumbent enjoys the profits, without any duty, but does that still elsewhere. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to* OLIVIA'S *Lodgings.*

Enter OLIVIA, *with a Candle in her hand.*

Oliv. So, I am now prepared once more for my timorous young lover's reception: my husband is gone—and go thou out too, thou next interrupter of love—[*Puts out the candle.*] Kind darkness! that frees us lovers from scandal and bashfulness, from the censure of our gallants and the world.—So, are you there?

Enter to OLIVIA, FIDELIA, *followed softly by* MANLY.

Come, my dear punctual lover, there is not such another in the world: thou hast beauty and youth to please a wife; address and wit to amuse and fool a husband; nay, thou hast all things to be wished in a lover, but your fits:—I hope, my dear, you won't have one to-night? and that you may not, I'll lock the door, though there be no need of it but to lock out your fits; for my husband is just gone out of town again.—Come, where are you? [*Goes to the door, and locks it.*]

Man. Well, thou hast impudence enough to give me fits too, and make revenge itself impotent. Hinder me from making thee more infamous, if it can be. [*Aside.*

Oliv. Come, come, my soul, come.

Fid. Presently, my dear; we have time enough, sure.

Oliv. How! time enough! True lovers can no more think they ever have time enough than love enough: You shall stay with me all night; but that is but a lover's moment. Come.

Fid. But won't you let me give you and myself the satisfaction of telling you how I abused your husband last night?

Oliv. Not when you can give me and yourself too the satisfaction of abusing him again to-night. —Come.

Fid. Let me but tell you how your husband—

Oliv. O, name not his, or Manly's more loathsome name, if you love me: I forbade 'em last night: and, you know, I mention'd my husband but once, and he came.—No talking, pray; 'twas ominous to us. You make me fancy a noise at the door already; but I'm resolved not to be interrupted.—[*A noise at the door.*]—Where are you? Come; for, rather than lose my dear expectation now, though my husband were at the door, and the bloody ruffian Manly here in the room, with all his awful insolence, I would give myself to this dear hand, to be led away to heavens of joys, which none but thou canst give.—But what's this noise at the door? So, I told you what talking would come to.—[*The noise at the door increases.*]—Ha!—O Heavens! my husband's voice! [OLIVIA *listens at the door.*

Man. Freeman is come too soon. [*Aside.*

Oliv. O, 'tis he!—Then here's the happiest minute lost, that ever bashful boy or trifling woman fool'd away!—I'm undone!—my husband's reconcilement too was false as my joy:—all delusion.—But come this way; here's a back door. [*Exit, and returns.*

The officious jade has lock'd us in, instead of locking others out!—But let us then escape your way, by the balcony; and, whilst you pull down the curtains, I'll fetch, from my closet, what next will best secure our escape: I have left my key in the door, and 'twill not suddenly be broke open. [*Exit.*

[*A noise as it were people forcing the door.*

Man. Stir not; yet fear nothing.

Fid. Nothing but your life, sir.

Man. We shall know this happy man she calls husband.

OLIVIA *re-enters.*

Oliv. Oh, where are you? What, idle with fear?—Come, I'll tie the curtains, if you will hold.—Here, take this cabinet and purse, for it is thine, if we escape; [MANLY *takes from her the cabinet and purse.*] therefore let us make haste. [*Exit* OLIVIA.

Man. 'Tis mine indeed now again; and it shall never escape more from me, to you at least.

The door broke open.—Enter VERNISH, *alone, with a dark Lanthorn and a Sword, running at* MANLY; *who draws, puts by the thrust, and defends himself, whilst* FIDELIA *runs at* VERNISH *behind.*

Ver. So, there I'm right sure——

[*With a low voice.*

Man. [*Softly.*] Sword and dark lanthorn, villain, are some odds; but——

Ver. Odds! I'm sure I find more odds than I expected.—What, has my insatiable two seconds at once? But—— [*With a low voice.*

[*Whilst they fight,* OLIVIA *re-enters, tying two curtains together.*

Oliv. Where are you now?—What, is he enter'd then, and are they fighting?—Oh! do not kill one that can make no defence!——[MANLY *throws* VERNISH *down, and disarms him.*] How! —But I think he has the better on't.—Here's his scarf: 'tis he. So, keep him down still.—I hope thou hast no hurt, my dearest? [*Embracing* MAN.

Enter to them FREEMAN, *Lord* PLAUSIBLE, NOVEL, JERRY BLACKACRE, *and the Widow* BLACKACRE, *lighted in by the two Sailors with Torches.*

Ha!—What, Manly!—And have I been thus concern'd for him? embracing him! and has he his jewels again too? What means this?—O, 'tis too sure, as well as my shame, which I'll go hide for ever.

[*Offers to go out, and* MANLY *stops her.*

Man. No, my dearest, after so much kindness as has pass'd between us, I cannot part with you yet.—Freeman, let nobody stir out of the room; for, notwithstanding your lights, we are yet in the dark, till this gentleman please to turn his face.—[*Pulls* VERNISH *by the sleeve.*] How, Vernish! art thou the happy man then? Thou! thou! —Speak, I say; but thy guilty silence tells me all. ——Well, I shall not upbraid thee; for my wonder is striking me as dumb as thy shame has made thee.——But what, my little volunteer hurt and fainting!

Fid. My wound, sir, is but a slight one, in my arm: 'tis only my fear of your danger, sir, not yet well over.

Man. But what's here? More strange things! [*Observing* FIDELIA'S *hair untied behind, and without a peruke, which she lost in the scuffle.* What means this long woman's hair and face? Now all of it appears too beautiful for a man, which I still thought womanish indeed!—What, you have not deceived me too, my little volunteer?

Oliv. Me she has, I'm sure. [*Aside.*

Man. Speak.

Enter ELIZA *and* LETTICE.

Eliz. What, cousin! I am brought hither by your woman, I suppose, to be a witness of the second vindication of your honour?

Oliv. Insulting is not generous: You might spare me: I have you.

Eliz. Have a care, cousin; you'll confess anon too much; and I would not have your secrets.

Man. Come, your blushes answer me sufficiently, and you have been my volunteer in love. [*To* FIDELIA.

Fid. I must confess, I needed no compulsion to follow you all the world over; which I attempted in this habit, partly out of shame to own my love to you, and fear of a greater shame, your refusal of it; for I knew of your engagement to this lady, and the constancy of your nature, which nothing could have alter'd but herself.

Man. Dear madam, I desired you to bring me out of confusion, and you have given me more. I know not what to speak to you, or how to look upon you: The sense of my rough, hard, and ill usage of you, (though chiefly your own fault,) gives me more pain, now 'tis over, than you had when you suffer'd it: and if my heart, the refusal of such a woman, [*Pointing to* OLIVIA.] were not a sacrifice to profane your love, and a greater wrong to you than ever yet I did you, I would beg of you to receive it, though you used it as she has done; for though it deserved not from her the treatment she gave it, it does from you.

Fid. Then it has had punishment sufficient from her already, and needs no more from me; and, I must confess, I would not be the only cause of making you break your last night't oath to me, of never parting with me, if you do not forget or repent it.

Man. Then take for ever my heart, and this with it; [*Gives her the cabinet.*] for 'twas given to you before, and my heart was before your due: I only beg leave to dispose of these few——Here, madam, I never yet left my wench unpaid.

[*Takes some of the jewels, and offers them to* OLIVIA: *she strikes them down:* PLAUSIBLE *and* NOVEL *take them up.*

Oliv. So it seems, by giving her the cabinet.

L. Plaus. The pendants appertain to your most faithful humble servant.

Nov. And this locket is mine; my earnest for love, which she never paid; therefore my own again.

Wid. By what law, sir, pray?—Cousin Olivia, a word: What, do they make a seizure on your goods and chattels, *vi et armis*? Make your demand, I say, and bring your trover: I'll follow the law for you.

Oliv. And I my revenge. [*Exit* OLIVIA.

Man. [*To* VER.] But 'tis, my friend, in your consideration most that I would have return'd part of your wife's portion; for 'twere hard to take all from thee, since thou hast paid so dear for't, in being such a rascal: Yet thy wife is a fortune without a portion; and thou art a man of that extraordinary merit in villainy, the world and fortune can never desert thee, though I do; therefore be not melancholy. Fare you well, sir. [*Exit* VERNISH, *doggedly.*]—Now, madam, I beg your pardon [*Turning to* FIDELIA.] for lessening the present I made you; but my heart can never be lessen'd: This, I confess, was too small for you before; for you deserve the Indian world; and I would now go thither out of covetousness, for your sake only.

Fid. Your heart, sir, is a present of that value, I can never make any return to't; [*Pulling* MANLY *from the company.*] but I can give you back such a present as this, which I got by the loss of my father, a gentleman of the north, of no mean extraction, whose only child I was; therefore left me in the present possession of two thousand pounds a-year, which I left, with multitudes of pretenders, to follow you, sir: having in several public places seen you, and observed your actions thoroughly, with admiration, when you were too much in love to take notice of mine, which yet was but too visible. The name of my family is Grey; my other, Fidelia: The rest of my story you shall know when I have fewer auditors.

Man. Nay, now, madam, you have taken from me all power of making you any compliment on my part; for I was going to tell you, that, for your sake only, I would quit the unknown pleasure of retirement, and rather stay in this ill world of ours still, though odious to me, than give you more frights again at sea, and make again too great venture there, in you alone. But if I should tell you now all this, and that your virtue (since greater than I thought any was in the world) had now reconciled me to't, my friend here would say, 'tis your estate that has made me friends with the world.

Free. I must confess I should; for I think most of our quarrels to the world are just such as we

have to a handsome woman, only because we cannot enjoy her as we would do.

Man. Nay, if thou art a plain dealer too, give me thy hand; for now I'll say I am thy friend indeed: and, for your sakes, though I have been so lately deceived in friends of both sexes,—

I will believe there are now in the world
Good-natured friends who are not prostitutes,
And handsome women worthy to be friends:
Yet, for my sake, let no one e'er confide
In tears, or oaths, in love, or friend untried.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY THE WIDOW BLACKACRE.

To you, the judges learned in stage laws,
Our poet now, by me, submits his cause;
For with young judges, such as most of you,
The men by women best their business do:
And truth on't is, if you did not sit here,
To keep for us a term throughout the year,
We could not live by'r tongues; nay, but for you,
Our chamber-practice would be little too.
And 'tis not only the stage-practiser,
Who, by your meeting, gets her living here;
For, as in hall of Westminster,
Sleek sempstress vents, amidst the courts, her ware;
So, while we bawl, and you in judgment sit,
The visor-mask sells linen too i' the pit.
O, many of your friends, besides us here,
Do live by putting off their several ware.
Here's daily done the great affair o' the nation:
Let love and us then ne'er have long vacation.—
But hold: like other pleaders, I have done,
Not my poor client's business, but my own.
Spare me a word then, now, for him.—First know,
Squires of the long robe, he does humbly shew
He has a just right in abusing you,
Because he is a brother templar too;
For, at the bar, you rally one another,
Nay, fool and knave is swallow'd from a brother:
If not the poet here, the templar spare,
And maul him when you catch him at the bar.—
From you, our common modish censurers,
Your favour, not your judgment, 'tis he fears:
Of all loves begs you then to rail, find fault;
For plays, like women, by the world are thought,
(When you speak kindly of 'em,) very naught.

THE

OLD BACHELOR.

BY

CONGREVE.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS BRACEGIRDLE.

How this vile world is changed! In former days,
Prologues were serious speeches before plays;
Grave, solemn things, as graces are to feasts,
Where poets begg'd a blessing from their guests.
But now, no more like suppliants we come;
A play makes war, and prologue is the drum:
Arm'd with keen satire, and with pointed wit,
We threaten you who do for judges sit,
To save our plays, or else we'll damn your pit.
But, for your comfort, it falls out to-day,
We've a young author and his first-born play;
So, standing only on his good behaviour,
He's very civil, and entreats your favour.
Not but the man has malice, would he shew it,
But, on my conscience, he's a bashful poet:
You think that strange—no matter; he 'll outgrow it.
Well, I'm his advocate: by me, he prays you—
(I don't know whether I shall speak to please you,)
He prays—O, bless me! what shall I do now?
Hang me if I know what he prays, or how!
And 'twas the prettiest prologue, as he wrote it:
Well, the deuce take me if I ha'n't forgot it!—
O Lord! for heaven's sake excuse the play,
Because, you know, if it be damn'd to-day,
I shall be hang'd for wanting what to say.
For my sake then—But I'm in such confusion,
I cannot stay to hear your resolution.
[*Runs off.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

HEARTWELL, *a surly old Bachelor, pretending to slight women; secretly in love with Silvia.*
BELLMOUR, *in love with Belinda.*
VAINLOVE, *capricious in his love; in love with Araminta.*
SHARPER.
Sir JOSEPH WITTOL.
Captain BLUFFE.
FONDLEWIFE, *a Banker.*
SETTER, *a Pimp.*
Servant to Fondlewife.

WOMEN.

ARAMINTA, *in love with Vainlove.*
BELINDA, *her Cousin, an affected Lady, in love with Bellmour.*
LÆTITIA, *Wife to Fondlewife.*
SILVIA, *Vainlove's forsaken Mistress.*
LUCY, *her Maid.*
BETTY.
Footmen.

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

BELLMOUR *and* VAINLOVE, *meeting.*

Bell. Vainlove, and abroad so early!—Good morrow. I thought a contemplative lover could no more have parted with his bed in a morning than he could have slept in't.

Vain. Bellmour, good morrow.—Why, truth on't is, these early sallies are not usual to me; but business, as you see, sir—[*Shewing letters.*] And business must be follow'd, or be lost.

Bell. Pox o' business!—And so must time, my friend, be close pursued, or lost—Business is the rub of life, perverts our aim, casts off the bias, and leaves us wide and short of the intended mark.

Vain. Pleasure, I guess, you mean.

Bell. Ay, what else has meaning?

Vain. Oh, the wise will tell you——

Bell. More than they believe, or understand.

Vain. How, how, Ned; a wise man say more than he understands?

Bell. Ay, ay: Pox! wisdom's nothing but a pretending to know and believe more than we really do. You read of but one wise man; and all that he knew was, that he knew nothing.—Come, come, leave business to idlers, and wisdom to fools; they have need of 'em: wit be my faculty, and pleasure my occupation; and let father Time shake his glass. Let low and earthly soul-grovel, till they have work'd themselves six foot deep into a grave.—Business is not my element: I roll in a higher orb, and dwell——

Vain. In castles i' the air of thy own building: that's thy element, Ned.—Well, as high a flier as you are, I have a lure may make you stoop.

[*Flings a letter.*

Bell. Ay marry, sir; I have a hawk's eye at a woman's hand.—There's more elegancy in the false spelling of this superscription [*Takes up the letter.*] than in all Cicero.—Let me see—How now!—Dear perfidious Vainlove! [*Reads.*

Vain. Hold, hold: 'Slife! that's the wrong—

Bell Nay, let's see the name—Sylvia!—How canst thou be ungrateful to that creature? She's extremely pretty, and loves thee entirely. I have heard her breathe such raptures about thee——

Vain. Ay, or any body that she's about——

Bell. No, faith, Frank, you wrong her: she has been just to you.

Vain. That's pleasant, by my troth, from thee, who hast enjoy'd her.

Bell. Never——Her affections—'tis true, by Heaven! she own'd it to my face; and, blushing like the virgin morn when it disclosed the cheat, which that trusty bawd of Nature, Night, had hid, confess'd her soul was true to you, though I, by treachery, had stolen the bliss.

Vain. So was true as turtle—in imagination, Ned, hey?—Preach this doctrine to husbands, and the married women will adore thee.

Bell. Why, faith, I think it will do well enough,—if the husbands be out of the way, for the wife to shew her fondness, and impatience of his absence, by choosing a lover as like him as she can; and what is unlike she may help out with her own fancy.

Vain. But is it not an abuse to the lover to be made a blind of? For she only stalks under him, to take aim at her husband.

Bell. As you say, the abuse is to the lover, not the husband; for 'tis an argument of her great zeal towards him, that she will enjoy him in effigy.

Vain. It must be a very superstitious country, where such zeal passes for true devotion. I doubt it will be damn'd by all our protestant husbands for flat idolatry.—But if you can make alderman Fondlewife of your persuasion, this letter will be needless.

Bell. What, the old banker with the handsome wife?

Vain. Ay.

Bell. Let me see—Lætitia—O, 'tis a delicious morsel!—Dear Frank, thou art the truest friend in the world.

Vain. Ay, am I not? to be continually starting of hares for you to course.—We were certainly cut out for one another; for my temper quits an amour just where thine takes it up.—But read that: it is an appointment for me this evening, when Fondlewife will be gone out of town, to meet the master of a ship, about the return of a venture which he's in danger of losing.—Read, read.

Bell. [*Reads.*] Hum, hum—Out of town this evening, and talks of sending for Mr Spintext to keep me company; but I'll take care he shall not be at home.—Good! Spintext!—O, the fanatic one-eyed parson!

Vain. Ay.

Bell. [*Reads.*] 'Hum, hum—That your conversation will be much more agreeable, if you can counterfeit his habit to blind the servants—Very good! Then I must be disguised—With all my heart—It adds a gusto to an amour; gives it the greater resemblance of theft; and, among us lewd mortals, the deeper the sin the sweeter.—Frank, I'm amazed at thy good-nature——

Vain. Faith, I hate love when 'tis forced upon a man, as I do wine—And this business is none of my seeking; I only happened to be once or twice, where Lætitia was the handsomest woman in company, so consequently apply'd myself to her——And it seems she has taken me at my word—Had you been there, or any body, it had been the same.

Bell. I wish I may succeed as the same.

Vain. Never doubt it; for if the spirit of cuckoldom be once raised up in a woman, the devil cann't lay it, 'till she has done't.

Bell. Pr'ythee, what sort of fellow is Fondlewife?

Vain. A kind of mongrel zealot, sometimes very precise and peevish: But I have seen him pleasant enough in his way; much addicted to jealousy, but more to fondness: So that, as he is often jealous without a cause, he's as often satisfied without reason.

Bell. A very even temper, and fit for my purpose. I must get your man Setter to provide my disguise.

Vain. Ay, you may take him for good and all if you will, for you have made him fit for nobody else.——Well————

Bell. You're going to visit in return of Sylvia's letter————Poor rogue. Any hour of the day or night will serve her——But do you know nothing of a new rival there?

Vain. Yes, Heartwell, that surly, old pretended woman-hater, thinks her virtuous; that's one reason why I fail her: I would have her fret herself out of conceit with me, that she may entertain some thoughts of him. I know he visits her every day.

Bell. Yet rails on still, and thinks his love unknown to us; a little time will swell him so, he must be forced to give it birth, and the discovery must needs be very pleasant from himself, to see what pains he will take, and how he will strain to be delivered of a secret, when he has miscarried on't already.

Vain. Well, good morrow; let's dine together; I'll meet you at the old place.

Bell. With all my heart; it lies convenient for us to pay our afternoon service to our mistresses; I find I am damnably in love. I'm so uneasy for not seeing Belinda yesterday.

Vain. But I saw my Araminta, yet am as impatient. [*Exit.*

Bell. Why what a cormorant in love am I! who, not contented with the slavery of honourable love in one place, and the pleasure of enjoying some half a score mistresses of my own acquiring, must yet take Vainlove's business upon my hands, because it lay too heavy upon his; so am not only forced to lie with other men's wives for 'em, but must also undertake the harder task of obliging their mistresses————I must take up, or I shall never hold out; flesh and blood cannot bear it always.

Enter SHARPER.

Sharp. I'm sorry to see this, Ned: Once a man comes to his soliloquies, I give him for gone.

Bell. Sharper, I'm glad to see thee.

Sharp. What, is Belinda cruel, that you are so thoughtful?

Bell. No faith, not for that————But there's a business of consequence fallen out to-day, that requires some consideration.

Sharp. Pr'ythee what mighty business of consequence canst thou have?

Bell. Why, you must know, 'tis a piece of work toward the finishing of an alderman; it seems I must put the last hand to it, and dub him cuckold, that he may be of equal dignity with the rest of his brethren: So I must beg Belinda's pardon—

Sharp. Faith, e'en give her over for good and all; you can have no hopes of getting her for a mistress, and she is too proud, too inconstant, too affected and too witty, and too handsome for a wife.

Bell. But she cann't have too much money—There's twelve thousand pound, Tom.————'Tis true she is excessively foppish and affected, but in my conscience, I believe the baggage loves me, for she never speaks well of me herself, nor suffers any body else to rail at me. Then, as I told you, there's twelve thousand pound—Hum——Why faith, upon second thoughts, she does not appear to be so very affected neither—Give her her due, I think the woman's a woman, and that's all. As such I'm sure I shall like her; for the devil take me if I don't love all the sex.

Sharp. And here comes one who swears as heartily he hates all the sex.

Enter HEARTWELL.

Bell. Who, Heartwell! Ay, but he knows better things————How now, George! where hast thou been snarling odious truths, and entertaining company like a physician, with discourse of their diseases and infirmities? What fine lady hast thou been putting out of conceit with herself, and persuading that the face she had been making all the morning was none of her own? for I know thou art as unmannerly and as unwelcome to a woman, as a looking-glass after the small-pox.

Heart. I confess I have not been sneering fulsome lies and nauseous flattery, fawning upon a little tawdry whore, that will fawn upon me again, and entertain any puppy that comes, like a tumbler, with the same tricks over and over. For such, I guess, may have been your late employment.

Bell. Would thou hadst come a little sooner! Vainlove would have wrought thy conversion, and been a champion for the cause.

Heart. What, has he been here? that's one of love's April-fools, is always upon some errand that's to no purpose, ever embarking in adventures, yet never comes to harbour.

Sharp. That's because he always sets out in foul weather, loves to buffet with the winds, meet the tide, and sail in the teeth of opposition.

Heart. What, has he not dropt anchor at Araminta?

Bell. Truth on't is, she fits his temper best, is a kind of floating island; sometimes seems in reach, then vanishes, and keeps him busied in the search.

Sharp. She had need have a good share of sense to manage so capricious a lover.

Bell. Faith, I don't know, he's of a temper the most easy to himself in the world; he takes as much always of an amour as he cares for, and quits it when it grows stale or unpleasant.

Sharp. An argument of very little passion, very good understanding, and very ill-nature.

Heart. And proves that Vainlove plays the fool with discretion.

Sharp. You, Bellmour, are bound in gratitude to stickle for him; you with pleasure reap that fruit, which he takes pains to sow: He does the

drudgery in the mine, and you stamp your image on the gold.

Bell. He's of another opinion, and says I do the drudgery in the mine. Well, we have each our share of sport, and each that which he likes best; 'tis his diversion to set, 'tis mine to cover the partridge.

Heart. And it should be mine to let 'em go again.

Sharp. Not till you had mouth'd a little, George: I think that's all thou art fit for now.

Heart. Good Mr Young-fellow, you're mistaken; as able as yourself, and as nimble too, tho' I mayn't have so much mercury in my limbs; 'tis true indeed, I don't force appetite, but wait the natural call of my lust, and think it time enough to be lewd, after I have had the temptation.

Bell. Time enough! ay too soon, I should rather have expected, from a person of your gravity.

Heart. Yet it is oftentimes too late with some of you young, termagant flashy sinners——you have all the guilt of the intention, and none of the pleasure of the practice——'Tis true, you are so eager in pursuit of the temptation, that you save the devil the trouble of tending you into it: Nor is it out of discretion, that you don't swallow that very hook yourselves have baited, but you are cloyed with the preparative, and what you mean for a whet, turns the edge of your puny stomachs. Your love is like your courage, which you shew for the first year or two upon all occasions; till in a little time, being disabled or disarmed, you abate of your vigour; and that daring blade, which was so often drawn, is bound to the peace for ever after.

Bell. Thou art an old fornicator of a singular good principle indeed! and art for encouraging youth, that they may be as wicked as thou art at thy years.

Heart. I am for having every body be what they pretend to be; a whoremaster be a whoremaster; and not like Vainlove, kiss a lap-dog with passion, when it would disgust him from the lady's own lips.

Bell. That only happens sometimes, where the dog has the sweeter breath, for the more cleanly conveyance. But, George, you must not quarrel with little gallantries of this nature: Women are often won by 'em. Who would refuse to kiss a lap-dog, if it were preliminary to the lips of his lady?

Sharp. Or omit playing with her fan, and cooling her if she were hot, when it might entitle him to the office of warming her when she should be cold?

Bell. What is it to read a play in a rainy day, when it may be the means of getting into a fair lady's books? Though you should be now and then interrupted in a witty scene, and she perhaps preserve her laughter, till the jest were over; even this may be borne with, considering the reward in prospect.

Heart. I confess, you that are women's asses bear great burdens; are forced to undergo dressing, dancing, singing, sighing, whining, rhyming, flattering, lying, grinning, cringing, and the drudgery of loving to boot.

Bell. O brute! the drudgery of loving!

Heart. Ay; why to come to love through all these incumbrances is like coming to an estate overcharged with debts, which, by the time you have paid, yields no further profit than what the bare tillage and manuring of the land will produce at the expence of your own sweat.

Bell. Pr'ythee how dost thou love?

Sharp. He! he hates the sex.

Heart. So I hate physic too——yet I may love to take it for my health.

Bell. Well come off, George, if at any time you should be taken straying.

Sharp. He has need of such an excuse, considering the present state of his body.

Heart. How d'ye mean?

Sharp. Why, if whoring be purging, (as you call it,) then, I may say, marriage is entering into a course of physic.

Bell. How, George, does the wind blow there?

Heart. It will as soon blow north and by south.—Marry, quotha! I hope in heaven I have a greater portion of grace, and I think I have baited too many of those traps to be caught in one myself.

Bell. Who the devil would have thee, unless 'twere an oyster-woman, to propagate young fry for Billingsgate?—Thy talent will never recommend thee to any thing of better quality.

Heart. My talent is chiefly that of speaking truth, which I don't expect should ever recommend me to people of quality.—I thank Heaven I have very honestly purchased the hatred of all the great families in town.

Sharp. And you, in return of spleen, hate them.—But could you hope to be received into the alliance of a noble family——

Heart. No; I hope I shall never merit that affliction—to be punished with a wife of birth, be a stag of the first head, and bear my horns aloft, like one of the supporters of my wife's coat.—'Sdeath, I would not be a cuckold to e'er an illustrious whore in England.

Bell. What, not to make your family, man, and provide for your children?

Sharp. For her children, you mean.

Heart. Ay, there you've nick'd it—there's the devil upon devil—O the pride and joy of heart 'twould be to me to have my son and heir resemble such a duke!—to have a fleering coxcomb scoff and cry—Master, your son's mighty like his grace, has just his smile and air of's face.—Then replies another—Methinks he has more of the marquis of such a place about his nose and eyes; though he has my Lord What-d'ye-call's mouth to a tittle—Then I, to put it off as unconcern'd, come chuck the infant under the chin, force a smile, and cry—Ay, the boy takes after his mother's relations—when the devil and she know 'tis a little compound of the whole body of nobility.

Bell. and Sharp. Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. Well, but, George, I have one question to ask you——

Heart. Pox, I have prattled away my time—I hope you are in no haste for an answer; for I sha'n't stay now. [*Looking on his watch.*

Bell. Nay, pr'ythee, George——

Heart. No; besides my business, I see a fool coming this way.—Adieu. [*Exit.*

Bell. What does he mean?—O, here he comes! Stand close, let 'em pass.

Sir JOSEPH WITTOL *and Captain* BLUFFE *cross the Stage.*

Sharp. What, in the name of wonder, is it?

Bell. Why, a fool.

Sharp. 'Tis a tawdry outside.

Bell. And a very beggarly lining—Yet he may be worth your acquaintance—A little of thy chemistry, Tom, may extract gold from that dirt.

Sharp. Say you so?—Faith, I am as poor as a chemist, and would be as industrious.—But what was he that follow'd him? Is not he a dragon that watches those golden pippins?

Bell. Hang him, no—he a dragon! If he be, 'tis a very peaceful one: I can ensure his anger dormant; or, should he seem to rouse, 'tis but well bashing him, and he will sleep like a top.

Sharp. Ay, is he of that kidney?

Bell. Yet is adored by that bigot, Sir Joseph Wittol, as the image of valour: he calls him his Back, and indeed they are never asunder—Yet last night, I know not by what mischance, the knight was alone, and had fallen into the hands of some night-walkers, who, I suppose, would have pillaged him: But I chanced to come by, and rescued him; though, I believe, he was heartily frighten'd; for, as soon as ever he was loose, he ran away, without staying to see who help'd him.

Sharp. Is that bully of his in the army?

Bell. No, but is a pretender, and wears the habit of a soldier, which, now-a-days, as often cloaks cowardice as a black gown does atheism.—You must know, he has been abroad—went purely to run away from a campaign—enrich'd himself with the plunder of a few oaths, and here vents 'em against the general, who, slighting men of merit, and preferring only those of interest, has made him quit the service.

Sharp. Wherein, no doubt, he magnifies his own performance.

Bell. Speaks miracles, is the drum to his own praise—the only implement of a soldier he resembles; like that, being full of blustering noise and emptiness.

Sharp. And, like that, of no use but to be beaten.

Bell. Right: but then the comparison breaks; for he will take a drubbing with as little noise as a pulpit-cushion.

Sharp. His name, and I have done.

Bell. Why, that, to pass it current too, he has gilded with a title: he is call'd Captain Bluffe.

Sharp. Well, I'll endeavour his acquaintance.—You steer another course—are bound
For Love's Island; I for the Golden Coast:
May each succeed in what he wishes most.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter Sir JOSEPH WITTOL—SHARPER *following.*

Sharp. Sure that's he, and alone.

Sir Jo. Um—Ay, this, this is the very damn'd place the inhuman cannibals, the bloody-minded villains, would have butcher'd me last night: no doubt they would have flea'd me alive, have sold my skin, and devour'd my members.

Sharp. How's this!

Sir Jo. An it hadn't been for a civil gentleman as came by, and frighten'd 'em away—But, egad, I durst not stay to give him thanks.

Sharp. This must be Bellmour he means—— Ha! I have a thought——

Sir Jo. Zooks, would the captain would come—the very remembrance makes me quake—Egad, I shall never be reconciled to this place heartily.

Sharp. 'Tis but trying, and being where I am at worst.——Now, luck!—Cursed fortune! this must be the place, this damn'd unlucky place—

Sir Jo. Egad, and so 'tis.——Why, here has been more mischief done, I perceive.

Sharp. No, 'tis gone, 'tis lost—Ten thousand devils on that chance which drew me hither—Ay, here, just here, this spot to me is hell; nothing to be found but the despair of what I've lost. [*Looking about as in search.*

Sir Jo. Poor gentleman!—By the Lord Harry, I'll stay no longer; for I've found too——

Sharp. Ha! who's that has found?—What have you found?—Restore it quickly, or, by—

Sir Jo. Not I, sir, not I, as I've a soul to be saved; I have found nothing but what has been to my loss, as I may say, and as you were saying, sir.

Sharp. O, your servant, sir, you are safe then, it seems: 'tis an ill wind that blows nobody good. Well, you may rejoice over my ill fortune, since it paid the price of your ransom.

Sir Jo. I rejoice! egad, not I, sir: I'm very sorry for your loss, with all my heart, blood and guts, sir; and if you did but know me, you'd ne'er say I were so ill-natured.

Sharp. Know you! Why, can you be so ungrateful to forget me?

Sir Jo. O Lord, forget him!—No, no, sir, I don't forget you—because I never saw your face before, egad. Ha, ha, ha!

Sharp. How! [*Angrily.*

Sir Jo. Stay, stay, sir, let me recollect—He's a damn'd angry fellow—I believe I had better remember him till I can get out of his sight—but out o' sight out o' mind, egad. [*Aside.*

Sharp. Methought the service I did you last night, sir, in preserving you from those ruffians, might have taken better root in your shallow memory.

Sir Jo. Gads-daggers, belts, blades, and scabbards, this is the very gentleman!—How shall I make him a return suitable to the greatness of his merit—I had a pretty thing to that purpose, if he ha'n't frighted it out of my memory.—Hem, hem.—Sir, I must submissively implore your pardon for my transgression of ingratitude and omission; having my entire dependence, sir, upon the superfluity of your goodness, which, like an inundation, will, I hope, totally immerge the recollection of my error, and leave me floating in your sight upon the full-blown bladders of repentance, by the help of which, I shall once more hope to swim into your favour. [*Bows.*

Sharp. So-h—O, sir, I am easily pacified: the acknowledgment of a gentleman——

Sir Jo. Acknowledgment, sir! I am all over acknowledgment, and will not stick to shew it in the greatest extremity, by night or by day, in sickness or in health, winter or summer; all seasons and occasions shall testify the reality and gratitude of your superabundant humble servant, Sir Joseph Wittol, knight—Hem, hem.

Sharp. Sir Joseph Wittol?

Sir Jo. The same, sir, of Wittol Hall, in *comitatu* Bucks.

Sharp. Is it possible!—Then I am happy to have obliged the mirror of knighthood and pink of courtesy in the age—Let me embrace you.

Sir Jo. O Lord, sir!

Sharp. My loss I esteem as a trifle repaid with interest, since it has purchased me the friendship and acquaintance of the person in the world whose character I admire.

Sir Jo. You are only pleased to say so, sir.—But pray, if I may be so bold, what is that loss you mention?

Sharp. O, term it no longer so, sir—In the scuffle last night I only dropt a bill of a hundred pound, which, I confess, I came half despairing to recover; but, thanks to my better fortune—

Sir Jo. You have found it, sir, then, it seems: I profess I'm heartily glad——

Sharp. Sir, your humble servant—I don't question but you are, that you have so cheap an opportunity of expressing your gratitude and generosity; since the refunding so trivial a sum will wholly acquit you, and doubly engage me.

Sir Jo. What a dickins does he mean by a trivial sum! [*Aside.*]—But have you found it, sir?

Sharp. No otherwise, I vow to Gad, but in my hopes in you, sir.

Sir Jo. Hum!

Sharp. But that's sufficient—'Twere injustice to doubt the honour of Sir Joseph Wittol.

Sir Jo. O Lord, sir!

Sharp. You are above, I'm sure, a thought so low, to suffer me to lose what was ventured in your service: nay, 'twas in a manner paid down for your deliverance; 'twas so much lent you—and you scorn, I'll say that for you——

Sir Jo. Nay, I'll say that for myself, (with your leave, sir,) I do scorn a dirty thing.—But, egad, I'm a little out of pocket at present.

Sharp. Psha! you cann't want a hundred pound. Your word is sufficient any were. 'Tis but borrowing so much dirt: you have large acres, and can soon repay it.—Money is but dirt, Sir Joseph—mere dirt.

Sir Jo. But, I profess, 'tis a dirt I have washed my hands of at present: I have laid it all out upon my back.

Sharp. Are you so extravagant in clothes, Sir Joseph?

Sir Jo. Ha, ha, ha, a very good jest, I profess! ha, ha, ha, a very good jest! and I did not know that I had said it, and that's a better jest than t'other. 'Tis a sign you and I ha'n't been long acquainted: you have lost a good jest for want of knowing me—I only mean a friend of mine whom I call my Back; he sticks as close to me, and follows me through all dangers—he is indeed back, breast, and head-piece, as it were, to me—egad, he's a brave fellow—Paugh, I am quite another thing when I am with him: I don't fear the devil, (God bless us) almost, if he be by.—Ah, had he been with me last night——

Sharp. If he had, sir, what then? he could have done no more, nor perhaps have suffer'd so much—Had he a hundred pound to lose? [*Angrily.*

Sir Jo. O Lord, sir, by no means—But I might have saved a hundred pound—[*Aside.*]—I meant innocently, as I hope to be saved, sir—A damn'd hot fellow—[*Aside.*]—only, as I was saying, I let him have all my ready money, to redeem his great sword from limbo.—But, sir, I have a letter of credit to Alderman Fondlewife, as far as two hundred pound; and, this afternoon, you shall see I am a person, such a one as you would wish to have met with.

Sharp. That you are, I'll be sworn. [*Aside.*]—Why, that's great, and like yourself.

Enter BLUFFE.

Sir Jo. O, here he comes!—Ay, my Hector of Troy! welcome, my bully, my back; egad, my heart has gone a-pit-pat for thee.

Bluff. How now, my young knight?—not for fear, I hope: he that knows me must be a stranger to fear.

Sir Jo. Nay, egad, I hate fear, ever since I had like to have died of a fright.—But——

Bluff. But, look you here, boy; here's your antidote, here's your jesuit's powder for a shaking fit.—But who hast thou got with thee? is he of mettle? [*Laying his hand upon his sword.*

Sir Jo. Ay, bully, a devilish smart fellow; and will fight like a cock.

Bluff. Say you so? then I honour him.—But has he been abroad? for every cock will fight upon his own dunghill.

Sir Jo. I don't know; but I'll present you—

Bluff. I'll recommend myself.—Sir, I honour you: I understand you love fighting: I reverence a man that loves fighting: Sir, I kiss your hilts.

Sharp. Sir, your servant; but you are misinform'd; for, unless it be to serve my particular friend, as Sir Joseph here, my country, or my religion, or in some very justifiable cause, I'm not for it.

Bluff. O Lord, I beg your pardon, sir; I find you are not of my palate; you cann't relish a dish of fighting without sweet sauce. Now, I think,

Fighting for fighting's sake's sufficient cause;
Fighting to me's religion and the laws.

Sir Jo. Ah, well said, my hero—Was not that great, sir?—By the Lord Harry, he says true: fighting is meat, drink, and cloth to him.—But, Back, this gentleman is one of the best friends I have in the world, and saved my life last night—You know, I told you.

Bluff. Ay! then I honour him again.—Sir, may I crave your name?

Sharp. Ay, sir, my name's Sharper.

Sir Jo. Pray, Mr Sharper, embrace my Back—very well—By the Lord Harry, Mr Sharper, he's as brave a fellow as Cannibal—Are not you, bully Back?

Sharp. Hannibal I believe you mean, Sir Joseph.

Bluff. Undoubtedly he did, sir: faith, Hannibal was a very pretty fellow—But, Sir Joseph, comparisons are odious—Hannibal was a very pretty fellow in those days, it must be granted; but, alas, sir! were he alive now, he would be nothing, nothing in the earth.

Sharp. How, sir!—I make a doubt if there be at this day a greater general breathing.

Bluff. O, excuse me, sir—Have you served abroad, sir?

Sharp. Not I, really, sir.

Bluff. O, I thought so—Why then you can know nothing, sir: I'm afraid you scarce know the history of the late war in Flanders, with all its particulars.

Sharp. Not I, sir, no more than public letters or the gazette tell us.

Bluff. Gazette!—Why there again now—Why, sir, there are not three words of truth, the year round, put into the gazette.—I'll tell you a strange thing now as to that—You must know, sir, I was resident in Flanders the last campaign—had a small post there; but no matter for that—Perhaps, sir, there was scarce any thing of moment done but an humble servant of yours, that shall be nameless, was an eye-witness of—I won't say had the greatest share in't; though I might say that too, since I name nobody, you know.—Well, Mr Sharper, would you think it? in all this time, as I hope for a truncheon, this rascally gazette-writer never so much as once mention'd me—not once, by the wars—took no more notice than as if Nol. Bluffe had not been in the land of the living!

Sharp. Strange!

Sir Jo. Yet, by the Lord Harry, it's true, Mr Sharper; for I went every day to coffee-houses to read the gazette myself.

Bluff. Ay, ay, no matter—You see, Mr Sharper, after all I am content to retire—live a private person—Scipio and others have done it.

Sharp. Impudent rogue! [*Aside.*

Sir Jo. Ay, this damn'd modesty of yours—Egad, if he would put in for't, he might be made general himself yet.

Bluff. O fie! no, Sir Joseph; you know I hate this.

Sir Jo. Let me but tell Mr Sharper a little how you ate fire out of the mouth of a cannon—egad he did: those impenetrable whiskers of his have confronted flames——

Bluff. Death! what do you mean, Sir Joseph?

Sir Jo. Look you now, I tell you he's so modest he'll own nothing.

Bluff. Pish! you have put me out; I have forgot what I was about. Pray hold your tongue, and give me leave—— [*Angrily.*

Sir Jo. I am dumb.

Bluff. This sword, I think I was telling you of, Mr Sharper—This sword I'll maintain to be the best divine, anatomist, lawyer, or casuist, in Europe: it shall decide a controversy or split a cause——

Sir Jo. Nay, now I must speak—it will split a hair; by the Lord Harry, I have seen it.

Bluff. Zounds, sir, it's a lie, you have not seen it, nor sha'n't see it: Sir, I say you cann't see: what d'ye say to that now?

Sir Jo. I am blind.

Bluff. Death! had any other man interrupted me——

Sir Jo. Good Mr Sharper, speak to him; I dare not look that way.

Sharp. Captain, Sir Joseph's penitent.

Bluff. O, I am calm, sir, calm as a discharged culverin—But 'twas indiscreet, when you know what will provoke me—Nay, come, Sir Joseph, you know my heat's soon over.

Sir Jo. Well, I'm a fool sometimes—But I'm sorry——

Bluff. Enough.

Sir Jo. Come, we'll go take a glass to drown animosities.—Mr Sharper, will you partake?

Sharp. I wait on you, sir—Nay, pray, captain—you are sir Joseph's back. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to Lodgings.*

Enter ARAMINTA *and* BELINDA.

Belin. Ah! nay, dear—pr'ythee, good, dear, sweet cousin, no more.—O, Gad! I swear you'd make one sick to hear you.

Aram. Bless me! what have I said to move you thus?

Belin. O, you have raved, talk'd idly, and all in commendation of that filthy, awkward, two-

legg'd creature, man—You don't know what you said; your fever has transported you.

Aram. If love be the fever which you mean, kind Heaven avert the cure: Let me have oil to feed that flame, and never let it be extinct till I myself am ashes.

Belin. There was a whine!—O Gad, I hate your horrid fancy—This love is the devil; and, sure, to be in love is to be possess'd——'Tis in the head, the heart, the blood, the—all over—O Gad, you are quite spoil'd!—I shall loath the sight of mankind for your sake.

Aram. Fie! this is gross affectation—A little of Bellmour's company would change the scene.

Belin. Filthy fellow!—I wonder, cousin——

Aram. I wonder, cousin, you should imagine I don't perceive you love him.

Belin. O, I love your hideous fancy!—Ha, ha, ha!—love a man!

Aram. Love a man!—yes, you would not love a beast?

Belin. Of all beasts not an ass—which is so like your Vainlove——Lard, I have seen an ass look so chagrin—ha, ha, ha!—(you must pardon me, I cann't help laughing,) that an absolute lover would have concluded the poor creature to have had darts, and flames, and altars, and all that in his breast.—Araminta, come, I'll talk seriously to you now: Could you but see with my eyes the buffoonery of one scene of address, a lover, set out with all his equipage and appurtenances, O Gad! sure you would——But you play the game, and, consequently, cann't see the miscarriages obvious to every stander-by.

Aram. Yes, yes, I can see something near it when you and Bellmour meet.—You don't know that you dreamt of Bellmour last night, and call'd him aloud in your sleep?

Belin. Pish! I cann't help dreaming of the devil sometimes: would you from thence infer I love him?

Aram. But that's not all: you caught me in your arms when you named him, and pressed me to your bosom—Sure, if I had not pinch'd you till you waked, you had stifled me with kisses.

Belin. O barbarous aspersion!

Aram. No aspersion, cousin; we are alone—Nay, I can tell you more.

Belin. I deny it all.

Aram. What, before you hear it?

Belin. My denial is premeditated, like your malice.——Lard, cousin, you talk oddly—Whatever the matter is, o' my soul, I'm afraid you'll follow evil courses.

Aram. Ha, ha, ha! this is pleasant.

Belin. You may laugh; but——

Aram. Ha, ha, ha!

Belin. You think the malicious grin becomes you—The devil take Bellmour—why do you tell me of him?

Aram. O, is it come out?—Now you are angry, I am sure you love him.—I tell nobody else, cousin—I have not betray'd you yet.

Belin. Pr'ythee tell it all the world: it's false.—Betty! [*Calls.*

Aram. Come then, kiss and friends.

Belin. Pish!

Aram. Pr'ythee don't be so peevish.

Belin. Pr'ythee don't be so impertinent.

Aram. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter BETTY.

Bet. Did your ladyship call, madam?

Belin. Get my hoods and tippet, and bid the footman call a chair. [*Exit* BETTY.

Aram. I hope you are not going out in dudgeon, cousin?

Enter Footman.

Foot. Madam, there are——

Belin. Is there a chair?

Foot. No, madam, there are Mr Bellmour and Mr Vainlove to wait upon your ladyship.

Aram. Are they below?

Foot. No, madam, they sent before, to know if you were at home.

Belin. The visit's to you, cousin; I suppose I am at my liberty.

Aram. Be ready to shew 'em up.—[*Exit Footman.*]—I cann't tell, cousin; I believe we are equally concerned: but if you continue your humour, it won't be very entertaining.——I know she'd fain be persuaded to stay. [*Aside.*

Belin. I shall oblige you, in leaving you to the full and free enjoyment of that conversation you admire.

Enter BETTY *with Hoods and Looking-Glass.*

Belin. Let me see—hold the glass——Lard, I look wretchedly to-day!

Aram. Betty, why don't you help my cousin? [*Putting on her hoods.*

Belin. Hold off your fists, and see that he gets a chair with a high roof, or a very low seat——Stay; come back here, you, Mrs Fidget—You are so ready to go to the footman——Here, take 'em all again; my mind's changed; I won't go.

[*Exit* BETTY *with the things.*

Aram. So, this I expected.—You won't oblige me then, cousin, and let me have all the company to myself?

Belin. No; upon deliberation, I have too much charity to trust you to yourself. The devil watches all opportunities; and, in this favourable disposition of your mind, Heaven knows how far you may be tempted—I am tender of your reputation.

Aram. I am obliged to you—But who's malicious now, Belinda?

Belin. Not I: witness, my heart, I stay out of pure affection.

Aram. In my conscience, I believe you.

Enter BELLMOUR *and* VAINLOVE.

Bell. So, fortune be praised!—To find you both within, ladies, is——

Aram. No miracle, I hope.

Bell. Not o' your side, madam, I confess——But my tyrant there and I are two buckets that can never come together.

Belin. Nor are ever like—Yet we often meet and clash.

Bell. How, never like! marry, Hymen forbid. But this it is to run so extravagantly in debt; I have laid out such a world of love in your service, that you think you can never be able to pay me all: So shun me for the same reason that you would a dun.

Belin. Ay, on my conscience, and the most impertinent and troublesome of duns—A dun for money will be quiet, when he sees his debtor has not wherewithal—But a dun for love is an eternal torment that never rests——

Bell. Till he has created love where there was none, and then gets it for his pains. For importunity in love, like importunity at court, first creates its own interest, and then pursues it for the favour.

Aram. Favours that are got by impudence and importunity, are like discoveries from the rack, when the afflicted person, for his ease, sometimes confesses secrets his heart knows nothing of.

Vain. I should rather think favours, so gained, to be due rewards to indefatigable devotion—— For, as love is a deity, he must be served by prayer.

Belin. O Gad, would you would all pray to love then, and let us alone!

Vain. You are the temples of love, and 'tis through you our devotion must be convey'd.

Aram. Rather poor silly idols of your own making, which, upon the least displeasure, you forsake, and set up new—Every man, now, changes his mistress and his religion, as his humour varies or his interest.

Vain. O, madam——

Aram. Nay come, I find we are growing serious, and then we are in great danger of being dull——If my music-master be not gone; I'll entertain you with a new song, which comes pretty near my own opinion of love and your sex—— Who's there? [*Calls.*

Enter Footman.

Is Mr Gavot gone?

Foot. Only to the next door; madam; I'll call him. [*Exit.*

Bell. Why, you won't hear me with patience.

Aram. What's the matter, cousin?

Bell. Nothing, madam, only——

Belin. Pr'ythee hold thy tongue——Lard, he has so pestered me with flames and stuff—— I think I sha'n't endure the sight of a fire this twelvemonth.

Bell. Yet all cann't melt that cruel frozen heart.

Belin. O Gad! I hate your hideous fancy—— You said that once before——If you must talk impertinently, for heaven's sake let it be with variety; don't come always, like the devil, wrapt in flames——I'll not hear a sentence more, that begins with an, *I burn*——Or an, *I beseech you, madam.*

Bell. But tell me how you would be adored—— I am very tractable.

Belin. Then know, I would be adored in silence.

Bell. Humph! I thought so, that you might have all the talk to yourself——you had better let me speak; for, if my thoughts fly to any pitch, I shall make villainous signs.

Belin. What will you get by that? to make such signs as I won't understand.

Bell. Ay, but if I'm tongue-tied, I must have all my actions free to——quicken your apprehension; and egad let me tell you, my most prevailing argument is expressed in dumb shew.

Enter Music-Master.

Aram. O I am glad we shall have a song to divert the discourse——Pray oblige us with the last new song.

SONG.

Thus to a ripe, consenting maid,
Poor, old, repenting Delia said,
Would you long preserve your lover,
Would you still his goddess reign,
Never let him all discover,
Never let him much obtain.

Men will admire, adore and die,
While wishing at your feet they lie:
But, admitting their embraces,
Wakes 'em from the golden dream;
Nothing's new besides our faces,
Every woman is the same.

Aram. So, how d'ye like the song, gentlemen?

Bell. O very well performed——but I don't much admire the words.

Aram. I expected it——there's too much truth in 'em: If Mr Gavot will walk with us in the garden, we'll have it once again——You may like it better at second hearing. You'll bring my cousin.

Bell. Faith, madam, I dare not speak to her, but I'll make signs.

[*Addresses* BELINDA *in dumb shew.*

Belin. O foh! your dumb rhetoric is more ridiculous than your talking impertinence; as an ape is a much more troublesome animal than a parrot.

Aram. Ay, cousin, and 'tis a sign the creatures mimick nature well; for there are few men but do more silly things than they say.

Bell. Well, I find my apishness has paid the ransome for my speech, and set it at liberty—— Though, I confess, I could be well enough pleased to drive on a love-bargain in that silent manner——'twould save a man a world of lying and swearing at the year's end. Besides, I have had a little experience, that brings to my mind——

When wit and reason, both, have failed to move,
Kind looks and actions, from success. do prove,
Even silence may be eloquent in love.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter SILVIA *and* LUCY.

Silv. Will he not come then?

Lucy. Yes, yes, come, I warrant him, if you will go in and be ready to receive him.

Silv. Why, did you not tell me——Whom mean you?

Lucy. Whom you should mean—Heartwell.

Silv. Senseless creature, I meant my Vainlove.

Lucy. You may as soon hope to recover your own maidenhead as his love. Therefore e'en set your heart at rest, and, in the name of opportunity, mind your own business. Strike Heartwell home, before the bait's worn off the hook. Age will come. He nibbled fairly yesterday, and no doubt will be eager enough to-day, to swallow the temptation.

Silv. Well, since there's no remedy—Yet tell me—For I would know, though to the anguish of my soul, how did he refuse? Tell me—how did he receive my letter, in anger or in scorn?

Lucy. Neither; but what was ten times worse, with damned, senseless indifference. By this light I could have spit in his face——Receive it! why he received it as I would one of your lovers that should come empty-handed; as a court lord does his mercer's bill, or a begging dedication:——he received it, as if't had been a letter from his wife.

Silv. What, did he not read it?

Lucy. Hummed it over, gave you his respects, and said he would take time to peruse it—but then he was in haste.

Silv. Respects, and peruse it! He's gone, and Araminta has bewitched him from me—Oh how the name of rival fires my blood——I could curse 'em both; eternal jealousy attend her love, and disappointment meet his lust! Oh that I could revenge the torment he has caused!—Methinks I feel the woman strong within me, and vengeance itches in the room of love.

Lucy. I have that in my head may make mischief.

Silv. How, dear Lucy?

Lucy. You know Araminta's dissembled coyness has won, and keeps him hers——

Silv. Could we persuade him that she loves another——

Lucy. No, you're out; could we persuade him, that she doats on him himself—Contrive a kind letter as from her, 'twould disgust his nicety, and take away his stomach.

Silv. Impossible; 'twill never take.

Lucy. Trouble not your head. Let me alone—I will inform myself of what past between 'em to-day, and about it streight——Hold! I'm mistaken, or that's Heartwell who stands talking at the corner—'tis he—go get you in, madam; receive him pleasantly, dress up your face in innocence and smiles, and dissemble the very want of dissimulation—You know what will take him.

Silv. 'Tis as hard to counterfeit love, as it is to conceal it: but I'll do my weak endeavour, though I fear I have not art.

Lucy. Hang art, madam, and trust to nature for dissembling.

Man was by nature woman's cully made:
We never are but by ourselves betrayed.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter HEARTWELL, VAINLOVE *and* BELLMOUR *following.*

Bell. Hist, hist, is not that Heartwell going to Silvia?

Vain. He's talking to himself, I think; pr'ythee let's try if we can hear him.

Heart. Why whither in the devil's name am I a-going now? Hum—Let me think—Is not this Silvia's house, the cave of that enchantress, and which consequently I ought to shun as I would infection? To enter here, is to put on the envenomed shirt, to run into the embraces of a fever, and, in some raving fits, be led to plunge myself into that more consuming fire, a woman's arms. Ha! well recollected, I will recover my reason, and be gone.

Bell. Now Venus forbid!

Vain. Hist——

Heart. Well, why do you not move? Feet, do your office—Not one inch; no, 'foregad I'm caught—There stands my north, and thither my needle points—Now could I curse myself, yet cannot repent. O thou delicious, damn'd, dear, destructive woman! 'Sdeath, how the young fellows will hoot me! I shall be the jest of the town: nay, in two days, I expect to be chronicled in ditty, and sung in woeful ballad, to the tune of "The Superannuated Maiden's Comfort," or "The Batchelor's Fall;" and upon the third, I shall be hanged in effigy, pasted up for the exemplary ornament of necessary-houses and coblers' stalls—Death! I cann't think on't——I'll run into the danger to lose the apprehension. [*Goes in.*

Bell. A very certain remedy, *probatum est*——Ha, ha, ha, poor George! thou art i'the right, thou hast sold thyself to laughter: the ill-natured town will find the jest just where thou hast lost it. Ha, ha, ha! how he struggled, like an old lawyer between two fees.

Vain. Or a young wench, between pleasure and reputation.

Bell. Or as you did to-day, when, half afraid, you snatched a kiss from Araminta.

Vain. She has made a quarrel on't.

Bell. Pauh! women are only angry at such offences, to have the pleasure of forgiving 'em.

Vain. And I love to have the pleasure of making my peace——I should not esteem a pardon if too easy won.

Bell. Thou dost not know what thou wouldst be at; whether thou wouldst have her angry or pleased. Couldst thou be content to marry Araminta?

Vain. Could you be content to go to heav'n?

Bell. Hum, not immediately, in my conscience not heartily: I'd do a little more good in my generation first, in order to deserve it.

Vain. Nor I to marry Araminta, till I merit her.

Bell. But how the devil dost thou expect to get her if she never yield?

Vain. That's true; but I would——

Bell. Marry her without her consent; thou'rt a riddle beyond woman——

Enter SETTER.

Trusty Setter, what tidings? How goes the project?

Set. As all lewd projects do, sir, where the devil prevents our endeavours with success.

Bell. A good hearing, Setter.

Vain. Well, I'll leave you with your engineer. [*Exit.*

Bell. And hast thou provided necessaries?

Set. All, all, sir; the large sanctified hat, and the like precise band, with a swinging long spiritual cloak, to cover carnal knavery——not forgetting the black patch, which Tribulation Spintext wears, as I'm informed, upon one eye, as a penal mourning for the ogling offences of his youth; and some say, with that eye he first discovered the frailty of his wife.

Bell. Well, in this fanatic father's habit will I confess Lætitia.

Set. Rather prepare her for confession, sir, by helping her to sin.

Bell. Be at your master's lodging in the evening—I shall use the robes. [*Exit* BELL.

Set. I shall, sir——I wonder to which of these two gentlemen I do most properly appertain—the one uses me as his attendant; the other (being the better acquainted with my parts) employs me as a pimp; why that's much the more honourable employment—by all means—I follow one as my master, but t'other follows me as his conductor.

Enter LUCY.

Lucy. There's the hang-dog his man——I had a power over him in the reign of my mistress; but he is too true a valet de chambre not to affect his master's faults; and consequently is revolted from his allegiance.

Set. Undoubtedly—'tis impossible to be a pimp and not a man of parts: that is, without being politic, diligent, secret, wary, and so forth—And to all this, valiant as Hercules——that is, passively valiant and actively obedient. Ah! Setter, what a treasure is here lost for want of being known!

Lucy. Here's some villainy a-foot, he's so thoughtful; may be I may discover something in my mask—Worthy sir, a word with you. [*Puts on her mask.*

Set. Why, if I were known, I might come to be a great man————

Lucy. Not to interrupt your meditation——

Set. And I should not be the first that has procured his greatness by pimping.

Lucy. Now poverty and the pox light upon thee, for a contemplative pimp.

Set. Ha! what art, who thus maliciously hast awakened me from my dream of glory? Speak, thou vile disturber————

Lucy. Of thy most vile cogitations—thou poor, conceited wretch, how wert thou valuing thyself upon thy master's employment; for he's the head pimp to Mr Bellmour.

Set. Good words, damsel, or I shall——But how dost thou know my master or me?

Lucy. Yes, I know both master and man to be————

Set. To be men perhaps; nay, faith, like enough; I often march in the rear of my master, and enter the breaches which he has made.

Lucy. Ay, the breach of faith, which he has begun, thou traitor to thy lawful princess!

Set. Why how now? pr'ythee who art? lay by that worldly face, and produce your natural visor.

Lucy. No, sirrah; I'll keep it on to abuse thee, and leave thee without hopes of revenge.

Set. Oh! I begin to smoke ye: thou art some forsaken Abigail, we have dallied with heretofore, and art come to tickle thy imagination with remembrance of iniquity past.

Lucy. No, thou pitiful flatterer of thy master's imperfections; thou maukin, made up of the shreds and parings of his superfluous fopperies.

Set. Thou art thy mistress's foul self, composed of her sullied iniquities and cloathing.

Lucy. Hang thee,—beggar's cur!—Thy master is but a mumper in love, lies canting at the gate, but never dares presume to enter the house.

Set. Thou art the wicket to thy mistress's gate, to be opened for all comers. In fine, thou art the high road to thy mistress, as a clap is to the pox.

Lucy. Beast, filthy toad, I can hold no longer! look and tremble. [*Unmasks.*

Set. How, Mrs Lucy?

Lucy. I wonder thou hast the impudence to look me in the face.

Set. 'Adsbud, who's in fault, mistress of mine? who flung the first stone? who undervalued my function? and who the devil could know you by instinct?

Lucy. You could know my office by instinct, and be hanged, which you have slandered most abominably. It vexes me not what you said of my person, but that my innocent calling should be exposed and scandalized——I cannot bear it. [*Cries.*

Set. Nay faith, Lucy, I'm sorry; I'll own myself to blame, though we were both in fault as to our offices——Come, I'll make you any reparation.

Lucy. Swear.

Set. I do swear to the utmost of my power.

Lucy. To be brief then: What is the reason your master did not appear to-day according to the summons I brought him?

Set. To answer you as briefly—He has a cause to be tried in another court.

Lucy. Come, tell me in plain terms how forward he is with Araminta?

Set. Too forward to be turned back——though he's a little in disgrace at present about a kiss which he forced. You and I can kiss, Lucy, without all that.

Lucy. Stand off——He's a precious jewel.

Set. And therefore you'd have him to set in your lady's locket.

Lucy. Where is he now?

Set. He'll be in the piazza presently.

Lucy. Remember to-day's behaviour——Let me see you with a penitent face.

Set. What, no token of amity, Lucy? You and I don't use to part with dry lips.

Lucy. No, no, avaunt——I'll not be slabbered and kissed now—I'm not in the humour. [*Exit.*

Set. I'll not quit you so——I'll follow, and put you into the humour. [*Exit after her.*

Enter Sir JOSEPH WITTOL, *and* BLUFFE.

Bluff. And so, out of your unwonted generosity——

Sir Jo. And good-nature, Back; I am good-natured, and I cann't help it.

Bluff. You have given him a note upon Fondlewife for a hundred pound.

Sir Jo. Ay, ay, poor fellow, he ventured fair for't.

Bluff. You have disobliged me in it——for I have occasion for the money; and, if you would look me in the face and live, go, and force him to re-deliver you the note——go—and bring it me hither. I'll stay here for you.

Sir Jo. You may stay till the day of judgment then, by the lord Harry. I know better things than to be run through the guts for a hundred pound—Why, I gave that hundred pound for being saved, and d'ye think, an there were no danger, I'll be so ungrateful to take it from the gentleman again?

Bluff. Well, go to him from me—Tell him, I say, he must refund——or bilbo's the word, and slaughter will ensue—if he refuse, tell him—but whisper that—tell him—I'll pink his soul——but whisper that softly to him.

Sir Jo. So softly, that he shall never hear on't, I warrant you—Why, what a devil's the matter, Bully, are you mad? Or d'ye think I'm mad?—'Egad! for my part, I don't love to be the messenger of ill news; 'tis an ungrateful office—so tell him yourself.

Bluff. By these hilts, I believe he frightened you into this composition:—I believe you gave it him out of fear, pure paltry fear—confess.

Sir Jo. No, no:—Hang't, I was not afraid neither—though, I confess, he did in a manner snap me up;—yet I cann't say it was altogether out of fear, but partly to prevent mischief,—for he was a devilish choleric fellow: And if my choler had been up too, 'egad there would have been mischief done, that's flat. And yet, I believe, if you had been by, I would as soon have let him have had a hundred of my teeth.——'Odsheart, if he should come just now when I'm angry—I'd tell him——Mum!

Enter SHARPER *and* BELLMOUR.

Bell. Thou'rt a lucky rogue!—There's your benefactor; you ought to return him thanks now you have received the favour.

Sharp. Sir Joseph, your note was accepted, and the money paid at sight: I'm come to return my thanks——

Sir Jo. They won't be accepted so readily as the bill, sir.

Bell. I doubt the knight repents, Tom:—He looks like the knight of the sorrowful face!

Sharp. This is a double generosity—Do me a kindness, and refuse my thanks—But I hope you are not offended that I offered them.

Sir Jo. May be I am, sir; may be I am not, sir; may be I am both, sir; what then? I hope I may be offended, without any offence to you, sir.

Sharp. Hey-day! captain, what's the matter? You can tell.

Bluff. Mr Sharper, the matter is plain——Sir Joseph has found out your trick, and does not care to be put upon, being a man of honour!

Sharp. Trick, sir?

Sir Jo. Ay, trick, sir; and won't be put upon, sir, being a man of honour, sir! and so, sir——

Sharp. Hark'e, Sir Joseph, a word with ye——In consideration of some favours lately received, I would not have you draw yourself into a premunire, by trusting to that sign of a man there——that pop-gun charged with wind.

Sir Jo. O Lord! O Lord! captain, come justify yourself——I'll give him the lie, if you'll stand to it.

Sharp. Nay, then I'll be before hand with you; take that, oaf! [*Cuffs him.*

Sir Jo. Captain, will you see this? Won't you pink his soul?

Bluff. Hush! 'tis not so convenient now——I shall find a time.

Sharp. What do you mutter about a time, rascal?—You were the incendiary—There's to put you in mind of your time—A memorandum. [*Kicks him.*

Bluff. Oh! this is your time, sir, you had best make use on't.

Sharp. 'Egad, and so I will:—There's again for you. [*Kicks him.*

Bluff. You are obliging, sir; but this is too public a place to thank you in: But in your ear, you are to be seen again.

Sharp. Ay, you inimitable coward, and to be felt——As for example. [*Kicks him.*

Bell. Ha, ha, ha! Pr'ythee come away: 'Tis scandalous to kick this puppy, without a man were cold, and had no other way to get himself a-heat. [*Exeunt* BELL. *and* SHARP.

Bluff. Very well—very fine—But 'tis no matter——Is not this fine, Sir Joseph?

Sir Jo. Indifferent, 'egad, in my opinion very indifferent—I'd rather go plain all my life, than wear such finery.

Bluff. Death and hell! to be affronted thus:—I'll die before I'll suffer it. [*Draws.*

Sir Jo. O Lord! his anger was not raised before——Nay, dear captain, don't be in a passion now he's gone—Put up, put up, dear Back! 'tis your Sir Joseph begs: Come, let me kiss thee:—So, so, put up! put up!

Bluff. By heaven! 'tis not to be put up.

Sir Jo. What, bully?

Bluff. The affront!

Sir Jo. No, 'egad! no more 'tis, for that's put up already; thy sword I mean.

Bluff. Well, Sir Joseph, at thy entreaty——But were not you, my friend, abused, and cuff'd, and kick'd— [*Putting up his sword.*

Sir Jo. Ay, ay! so were you too! No matter, 'tis past—

Bluff. By the immortal thunder of great guns! 'tis false—He sucks not vital air who dares affirm it to this face! [*Looks big.*

Sir Jo. To that face I grant you, captain——No, no, I grant you——Not to that face, by the Lord Harry!——If you had put on your fighting face before, you had done his business—He durst as soon have kissed you, as kick'd you to your face——But a man can no more help what's done behind his back, than what's said——Come, we'll think no more of what's past.

Bluff. I'll call a council of war within, to consider of my revenge to come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to* SILVIA'S *Lodgings.*

Enter HEARTWELL *and* SILVIA.

SONG.

As Amoret and Thyrsis lay
Melting the hours in gentle play,
Joining faces, mingling kisses,
And exchanging harmless blisses,
He trembling, cried, with eager haste,
O let me feed as well as taste,
I die, if I'm not wholly blest.

The fearful nymph replied—Forbear!
I cannot, dare not, must not hear:
Dearest Thyrsis, do not move me,
Do not—do not—if you love me.
O let me—still the shepherd said;
But while she fond resistance made,
The hasty joy, in struggling, fled.

Vex'd at the pleasure she had miss'd,
She frown'd and blush'd, then sigh'd and kiss'd,
And seem'd to moan, in sullen cooing,
The sad miscarriage of their wooing:
But vain, alas! were all her charms,
For Thyrsis, deaf to love's alarms,
Baffled and senseless, tired in her arms.

After the song, a Dance of Antics.

Silv. Indeed it is very fine—I could look upon 'em all day.

Heart. Well, has this prevailed for me, and will you look upon me?

Silv. If you could sing and dance so, I should love to look upon you too.

Heart. Why 'twas I sung and danced; I gave music to the voice, and life to their measures——Look you here, Silvia, [*Pulling out a purse, and chinking it.*] here are songs and dances, poetry and music——Hark! how sweetly one guinea rhymes to another—And how they dance to the music of their own chink. This buys all the t'other—And this thou shalt have; this, and all that I am worth, for the purchase of thy love——Say, is it mine then? Ha! speak, syren—Oons! why do I look on her! Yet I must—Speak, dear angel, devil, saint, witch! do not rack me in suspence.

Silv. Nay, don't stare at me so—You make me blush—I cannot look.

Heart. Oh, manhood, where art thou? What am I come to? A woman's toy, at these years! 'Sdeath! a bearded baby for a girl to dandle.—O dotage, dotage! That ever that noble passion, lust, should ebb to this degree—No reflux of vigorous blood: But milky love supplies the empty channels, and prompts me to the softness of a child—A mere infant, and would suck. Can you love me, Silvia?—speak!

Silv. I dare not speak till I believe you,—and indeed I'm afraid to believe you yet.

Heart. Pox, how her innocence torments and pleases me! Lying, child, is indeed the art of love, and men are generally masters in it: But I'm so newly entered, you cannot distrust me of any skill in the treacherous mystery——Now, by my soul, I cannot lie, though it were to serve a friend or gain a mistress.

Silv. Must you lie, then, if you say you love me?

Heart. No, no, dear ignorance! thou beauteous changeling!—I tell thee I do love thee, and tell it for a truth, a naked truth, which I'm ashamed to discover.

Silv. But love, they say, is a tender thing, that will smooth frowns, and make calm an angry face; will soften a rugged temper, and make ill-humoured people good:—You look ready to fright one, and talk as if your passion were not love but anger.

Heart. 'Tis both; for I am angry with myself when I am pleased with you—And a pox upon me for loving thee so well—Yet I must on—'Tis a bearded arrow, and will more easily be thrust forward than drawn back.

Silv. Indeed, if I were well assured you loved—but how can I be well assured?

Heart. Take the symptoms; and ask all the tyrants of thy sex, if their fools are not known by this party-coloured livery—I am melancholy, when thou art absent; look like an ass, when thou art present; wake for you when I should sleep; and even dream of you when I am awake;

sigh much, drink little, eat less; court solitude; am grown very entertaining to myself, and (as I am informed) very troublesome to every body else. If this be not love, it is madness, and then it is pardonable——Nay, yet a more certain sign than all this—I give thee my money!

Silv. Ay, but that is no sign; for, they say, gentlemen will give money to any naughty woman to come to bed to them——O, Gemini! I hope you don't mean so——for I won't be a whore.

Heart. The more is the pity. [*Aside.*

Silv. Nay, if you would marry me, you should not come to bed to me—You have such a beard, and would so prickle one. But do you intend to marry me?

Heart. That a fool should ask such a malicious question!—'Sdeath, I shall be drawn in before I know where I am——However, I find I am pretty sure of her consent, if I am put to it. [*Aside.*

Marry you! no, no, I'll love you—

Silv. Nay, but if you love me, you must marry me; what, don't I know my father loved my mother, and was married to her!

Heart. Ay, ay! in old days people married where they loved; but that fashion is changed, child.

Silv. Never tell me that; I know it is not changed by myself; for I love you, and would marry you.

Heart. I'll have my beard shaved, it sha'n't hurt thee, and we'll go to bed——

Silv. No, no, I'm not such a fool neither, but I can keep myself honest.—Here, I won't keep any thing that's yours; I hate you now, [*Throws the purse.*] and I'll never see you again, 'cause you'd have me naughty. [*Going.*

Heart. Damn her, let her go! and a good riddance——Yet so much tenderness and beauty—and honesty together, is a jewel—— Stay, Silvia! —But then to marry——Why every man plays the fool once in his life: But to marry is playing the fool all one's life long.

Silv. What did you call me for?

Heart. I'll give thee all I have: And thou shalt live with me in every thing so like my wife, the world shall believe it: Nay, thou shalt think so thyself——Only let me not think so.

Silv. No, I'll die before I'll be your whore—— as well as I love you.

Heart. [*Aside.*] A woman, and ignorant, may be honest, when 'tis out of obstinacy and contradiction—But, 'sdeath! it is but a may be, and upon scurvy terms——Well, farewell then ——If I can get out of sight I may get the better of myself.

Silv. Well—good by. [*Turns and weeps.*

Heart. Ha! Nay come, we'll kiss at parting. [*Kisses her.*] By heaven her kiss is sweeter than liberty——I will marry thee——There thou hast don't; all my resolve melted in that kiss——one more.

Silv. But when?

Heart. I'm impatient till it be done; I will not give myself liberty to think, lest I should cool—I will about a licence straight—In the evening expect me—One kiss more to confirm me mad; so. [*Exit.*

Silv. Ha, ha, ha! an old fox trapp'd—

Enter LUCY.

Bless me! you frighted me; I thought he had been come again, and had heard me.

Lucy. Lord, madam, I met your lover in as much haste as if he had been going for a midwife.

Silv. He's going for a parson, girl, the forerunner of a midwife, some nine months hence—Well, I find dissembling to our sex is as natural as swimming to a negro; we may depend upon our skill to save us at a plunge, though till then we never make the experiment——But how hast thou succeeded?

Lucy. As you would wish——Since there is no reclaiming Vainlove, I have found out a pique she has taken at him, and have framed a letter, that makes her sue for reconciliation first. I know that will do—walk in, and I'll shew it you. Come, madam, you're like to have a happy time on't, both your love and anger satisfied—All that can charm our sex conspire to please you.

That woman sure enjoys a blessed night,
Whom love and vengeance do at once delight.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter BELLMOUR *in fanatic Habit, and* SETTER.

Bell. 'Tis pretty near the hour. [*Looking on his watch.*] Well, and how, Setter, ha, does my hypocrisy fit me, ha? Does it sit easy on me?

Set. O most religiously well, sir.

Bell. I wonder why all our young fellows should glory in an opinion of atheism, when they may be so much more conveniently lewd under the coverlet of religion.

Set. 'Sbud, sir, away quickly! there's Fondlewife just turned the corner, and's coming this way.

Bell. 'Gads so, there he is; he must not see me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter FONDLEWIFE *and* BARNABY.

Fond. I say, I will tarry at home.

Bar. But, sir—

Fond. Good lack! I profess the spirit of contradiction hath possessed the lad——I say I will tarry at home, varlet!

Bar. I have done, sir; then farewell five hundred pound!

Fond. Ha, how's that? Stay, stay, did you leave word, say you, with his wife—with Comfort herself?

Bar. I did; and Comfort will send Tribulation hither as soon as ever he comes home——I could have brought young Mr Prig to have kept my mistress company in the mean time; but you say—

Fond. How, how, say, varlet! I say, let him not come near my doors. I say he is a wanton young Levite, and pampereth himself up with dainties, that he may look lovely in the eyes of women—Sincerely I am afraid he hath already defiled the tabernacle of our sister Comfort; while her good husband is deluded by his godly appearance——I say, that even lust doth sparkle in his eyes and glow upon his cheeks, and that I would as soon trust my wife with a lord's high-fed chaplain.

Bar. Sir, the hour draws nigh, and nothing will be done there till you come.

Fond. And nothing can be done here till I go—So that I'll tarry, d'ye see.

Bar. And run the hazard to lose your affair so?

Fond. Good lack, good lack!—I profess it is a very sufficient vexation for a man to have a handsome wife.

Bar. Never, sir, but when the man is an insufficient husband. 'Tis then, indeed, like the vanity of taking a fine house, and yet be forced to let lodgings, to help to pay the rent.

Fond. I profess a very apt comparison, varlet. Go in, and bid my cocky come out to me; I will give her some instructions, I will reason with her before I go; [*Exit* BARNABY.] and, in the mean time, I will reason with myself——Tell me, Isaac, why art thee jealous? Why art thee distrustful of the wife of thy bosom?—Because she is young and vigorous, and I am old and impotent—Then why didst thee marry, Isaac?—Because she was beautiful and tempting, and because I was obstinate and doting; so that my inclination was, and is still, greater than my power——And will not that which tempted thee also tempt others, who will tempt her, Isaac?—I fear it much—But does not thy wife love thee, nay, dote upon thee?—Yes—Why then,——Ay, but to say truth, she's fonder of me than she has reason to be; and, in the way of trade, we still suspect the smoothest dealers of the deepest designs; and that she has some designs deeper than thou canst reach, thou hast experimented, Isaac——But mum!

Enter LÆTITIA.

Læt. I hope my dearest jewel is not going to leave me—Are you, Nykin?

Fond. Wife!—have you thoroughly considered how detestable, how heinous, and how crying a sin, the sin of adultery is? Have you weighed it, I say? For it is a very weighty sin; and altho' it may lie heavy upon thee, yet thy husband must also bear his part; for thy iniquity will fall upon his head.

Læt. Bless me, what means my dear!

Fond. [*Aside.*] I profess she has an alluring eye; I'm doubtful whether I shall trust her, even with Tribulation himself—Speak, I say, have you considered what it is to cuckold your husband?

Læt. [*Aside.*] I'm amazed:—sure he has discovered nothing—Who has wronged me to my dearest? I hope my jewel does not think that ever I had any such thing in my head, or ever will have?

Fond. No, no, I tell you I shall have it in my head—You will have it somewhere else.

Læt. [*Aside.*] I know not what to think. But I'm resolved to find the meaning of it—Unkind dear! was it for this you sent to call me? Is it not affliction enough that you are to leave me, but you must study to increase it by unjust suspicions? [*Crying.*] Well—well—you know my fondness, and you love to tyrannize——Go on, cruel man! do—triumph over my poor heart while it holds, which cannot be long, with this usage of yours—But that's what you want——Well—you will have your ends soon—you will—you will—Yes, it will break to oblige you. [*Sighs.*

Fond. Verily, I fear, I have carried the jest too far——Nay, look you now if she does not weep——'tis the fondest fool——Nay, Cocky, Cocky! nay, dear Cocky! don't cry, I was but in jest, I was, ifeck.

Læt. [*Aside.*] Oh! then all's safe. I was terribly frighted—My affliction is always your jest, barbarous man! Oh, that I should love to this degree! yet——

Fond. Nay, Cocky!

Læt. No, no, you are weary of me, that's it—that's all, you would get another wife—another fond fool, to break her heart—Well, be as cruel as you can to me, I'll pray for you; and when I am dead with grief, may you have one that will love you as well as I have done: I shall be contented to lie in peace in my cold grave, since it will please you. [*Sighs.*

Fond. Good lack, good lack! she would melt a heart of oak—I profess I can hold no longer——Nay, dear Cocky—Ifeck you'll break my heart—ifeck you will—See, you have made me weep—made poor Nykin weep——Nay, come kiss, buss poor Nykin—and I won't leave thee——I'll lose all first.

Læt. [*Aside.*] How! Heaven forbid! that will be carrying the jest too far indeed.

Fond. Won't you kiss Nykin?

Læt. Go, naughty Nykin, you don't love me.

Fond. Kiss, kiss; ifeck I do.

Læt. No, you don't. [*She kisses him.*

Fond. What, not love Cocky?

Læt. No——h. [*Sighs.*

Fond. I profess I love thee better than five hundred pound; and so thou shalt say, for I'll leave it to stay with thee.

Læt. No, you sha'n't neglect your business for me—No, indeed, you sha'n't, Nykin—If you don't go, I'll think you been dealous of me still.

Fond. He, he, he! wilt thou, poor fool? Then I will go, I won't be dealous——Poor Cocky, kiss Nykin, kiss Nykin, ee, ee, ee!——Here will be the good man anon, to talk to Cocky, and teach her how a wife ought to behave herself.

Let. [*Aside.*] I hope to have one that will show me how a husband ought to behave himself——I shall be glad to learn, to please my jewel. [*Kiss.*

Fond. That's my good dear!——Come, kiss Nykin once more, and then get you in——So—Get you in, get you in. By, by—

Let. By, Nykin.

Fond. By, Cocky.

Let. By, Nykin. [*She goes in.*

Fond. By, Cocky; by, by— [*Exit.*

Enter VAINLOVE *and* SHARPER.

Sharp. How! Araminta lost?

Vain. To confirm what I have said, read this. [*Gives a letter.*

Sharp. [*Reads.*] Hum, hum.—"And what then appear'd a fault, upon reflection, seems only an effect of a too powerful passion. I'm afraid I give too great a proof of my own at this time—I am in disorder for what I have written: but something, I know not what, forced me. I only beg a favourable censure of this, and your

ARAMINTA."

Lost! Pray Heaven thou hast not lost thy wits.——Here, here, she's thy own, man, sign'd and seal'd too——To her, man—A delicious melon, pure and consenting ripe, and only waits thy cutting up—She has been breeding love to thee all this while, and just now she's deliver'd of it.

Vain. 'Tis an untimely fruit, and she has miscarried of her love.

Sharp. Never leave this damn'd ill-natured whimsy, Frank?—Thou hast a sickly, peevish appetite; only chew love, and cannot digest it.

Vain. Yes, when I feed myself—But I hate to be cramm'd—By Heaven, there's not a woman will give a man the pleasure of a chace—My sport is always baulk'd or cut short—I stumble over the game I would pursue—'Tis dull and unnatural to have a hare run full in the hound's mouth, and would distaste the keenest hunter—I would have overtaken, not have met, my game.

Sharp. However, I hope you don't mean to forsake it; that will be but a kind of a mongrel cur's trick.—Well, are you for the Mall?

Vain. No; she will be there this evening——Yes, I will go too; and she shall see her error in——

Sharp. In her choice, egad——But thou canst not be so great a brute as to slight her.

Vain. I should disappoint her if I did not——By her management I should think she expects it.

All naturally fly what does pursue:
'Tis fit men should be coy, when women woo.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to a Room in* FONDLEWIFE'S *House.*

A Servant introducing BELLMOUR, *in a fanatic habit, with a patch upon one eye, and a book in his hand.*

Serv. Here's a chair, sir, if you please to repose yourself.—I'll call my mistress. [*Exit Servant.*

Bell. Secure in my disguise, I have out-faced suspicion, and even dared discovery—This cloak my sanctity, and trusty Scarron's novels my prayer-book, methinks I am the very picture of Montufar in the Hypocrites.—O, she comes.

Enter LÆTITIA.

So breaks Aurora through the veil of night,
Thus fly the clouds, divided by her light,
And every eye receives a new-born sight.

[*Throwing off his cloak, patch, &c.*

Let. Thus strew'd with blushes, like——Ah, Heaven defend me! Who's this?

[*Discovering him, starts.*

Bell. Your lover.

Let. Vainlove's friend! I know his face, and he has betray'd me to him. [*Aside.*

Bell. You are surprised. Did you not expect a lover, madam? Those eyes shone kindly on my first appearance, though now they are overcast.

Let. I may well be surprised at your person and impudence; they are both new to me—You are not what your first appearance promised: The piety of your habit was welcome, but not the hypocrisy.

Bell. Rather the hypocrisy was welcome, but not the hypocrite.

Let. Who are you, sir? You have mistaken the house sure.

Bell. I have directions in my pocket, which agree with every thing but your unkindness.

[*Pulls out the letter.*

Let. My letter!—Base Vainlove!—Then 'tis too late to dissemble. [*Aside.*]—'Tis plain then you have mistaken the person. [*Going.*

Bell. If we part so I'm mistaken.——Hold, hold, madam—I confess I have run into an error—I beg your pardon a thousand times—What an eternal blockhead am I! Can you forgive me the disorder I have put you into?—But it is a mistake which any body might have made.

Let. What can this mean? 'Tis impossible he should be mistaken after all this—A handsome fellow, if he had not surprised me—Methinks, now I look on him again, I would not have him mistaken. [*Aside.*]—We are all liable to mistakes, sir: If you own it to be so, there needs no farther apology.

Bell. Nay, faith, madam, 'tis a pleasant one, and worth your hearing—Expecting a friend, last night, at his lodgings, till 'twas late, my intimacy with him gave me the freedom of his bed: He not coming home all night, a letter was deliver'd to me by a servant in the morning: Upon the perusal, I found the contents so charming, that I could think of nothing all day but putting 'em in practice—till just now, (the first time I ever looked upon the superscription,) I am the most surprised in the world to find it directed to Mr Vainlove.—Gad, madam, I ask you a million of pardons, and will make you any satisfaction.

Let. I am discover'd—and either Vainlove is not guilty, or he has handsomely excused him. [*Aside.*

Bell. You appear concern'd, madam?

Let. I hope you are a gentleman—and, since you are privy to a weak woman's failing, won't turn it to the prejudice of her reputation. You look as if you had more honour——

Bell. And more love—or my face is a false witness, and deserves to be pilloried.——No, by Heaven, I swear——

Let. Nay, don't swear, if you'd have me believe you, but promise——

Bell. Well, I promise—A promise is so cold—Give me leave to swear—by those eyes, those killing eyes—by those healing lips—O, press the soft charm close to mine, and seal 'em up for ever! [*He kisses her.*

Let. Upon that condition.

Bell. Eternity was in that moment——One more, upon any condition.

Let. Nay, now——I never saw any thing so agreeably impudent. [*Aside.*]——Won't you censure me for this now—but 'tis to buy your silence—[*Kiss.*]—O, but what am I doing?

Bell. Doing! no tongue can express it—not thy own; nor any thing but thy lips—I am faint with the excess of bliss—Oh, for love's sake, lead me any whither, where I may lie down—quickly; for I'm afraid I shall have a fit.

Let. Bless me! what fit?

Bell. Oh, a convulsion—I feel the symptoms.

Let. Does it hold you long? I'm afraid to carry you into my chamber.

Bell. Oh, no—let me lie down upon the bed; —the fit will be soon over. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to St James's Park.*

Enter ARAMINTA *and* BELINDA, *meeting.*

Belin. Lard, my dear, I am glad I have met you—I have been at the Exchange since, and am so tired——

Aram. Why, what's the matter?

Belin. O the most inhuman, barbarous hackney-coach!—I am jolted to a jelly—Am I not horribly touzed? [*Pulls out a pocket-glass.*

Aram. Your head's a little out of order.

Belin. A little! O, frightful! What a furious phiz I have! O, most rueful!—Ha, ha, ha! O Gad, I hope nobody will come this way till I put myself a little in repair——Ah, my dear, I have seen such unhewn creatures since—Ha, ha, ha! I cann't for my soul help thinking that I look just like one of 'em——Good dear, pin this, and I'll tell you—Very well—so thank you, my dear: ——But, as I was telling you—Pish! this is the untoward'st lock——So, as I was telling you—How d'ye like me now?—hideous, ha?—frightful still, or how?

Aram. No, no; you're very well as can be.

Belin. And so—But where did I leave off, my dear?—I was telling you——

Aram. You were about to tell me something, child—but you left off before you began.

Belin. O, a most comical sight—A country 'squire, with the equipage of a wife and two daughters, came to Mr Snipwell's shop while I was there——But, O Gad, two such unlick'd cubs!

Aram. I warrant, plump, cherry-cheek'd, country girls.

Belin. Ay, o' my conscience, fat as barn-door fowl; but so bedeck'd, you would have taken 'em for Friezland hens, with their feathers growing the wrong way—O such outlandish creatures! such *tramontanæ*, and foreigners to the fashion, or any thing in practice!—I had not patience to behold——I undertook the modelling of one of their fronts, the more modern structure——

Aram. Bless me, cousin, why would you affront any body so? They might be gentlewomen of a very good family.

Belin. Of a very ancient one, I dare swear, by their dress—Affront! Psha, how you're mistaken! The poor creature, I warrant, was as full of curtsies as if I had been her god-mother. The truth on't is, I did endeavour to make her look like a Christian: and she was sensible of it; for she thank'd me, and gave me two apples, piping hot, out of her under-petticoat pocket—ha, ha, ha! and t'other did so stare and gape, I fancied her like the front of her father's hall; her eyes were the two jut-windows, and her mouth the great door, most hospitably kept open for the entertainment of travelling flies.

Aram. So then you have been diverted.—What did they buy?

Belin. Why, the father bought a powder-horn, and an almanack, and a comb-case; the mother, a great fruz tour and a fat-amber necklace, the daughters only tore two pair of kid gloves with trying 'em on——O Gad, here comes the fool that dined at my Lady Freelove's t'other day!

Enter Sir JOSEPH *and* BLUFFE.

Aram. May be he may not know us again.

Belin. We'll put on our masks, to secure his ignorance. [*They put on their masks.*

Sir Jo. Nay, Gad, I'll pick up; I'm resolved to make a night on't—I'll go to Alderman Foudlewife by and by, and get fifty pieces more from him——Adslidikins, bully, we'll wallow in wine and women.—Why, this same Madeira wine has made me as light as a grasshopper— Hist, hist, bully! dost thou see those tearers?—[*Sings.*] Look you what here is—Look you what here is—Tol, lol, dera, tol, lol——Egad, t'other glass of Madeira, and I durst have attack'd 'em in my own proper person, without your help.

Bluff. Come on then, knight—But d'ye know what to say to 'em?

Sir Jo. Say! Poo, pox, I've enough to say—never fear it—that is, if I can but think on't: truth is, I have but a treacherous memory.

Belin. O frightful! Cousin, what shall we do? these things come toward us.

Aram. No matter—I see Vainlove coming this way—and, to confess my failing, I am willing to give him an opportunity of making his peace with me—and to rid me of these coxcombs, when I seem oppress'd with them, will be a fair one.

Bluff. Ladies, by these hilts, you are well met.

Aram. We are afraid not.

Bluff. What says my pretty little knapsack-carrier? [*To* BELINDA.

Belin. O monstrous filthy fellow!—Good slovenly Captain Huff, Bluff—what is your hideous name?—be gone: You stink of brandy and tobacco, most soldier-like—Foh! [*Spits.*

Sir Jo. Now am I slap-dash down in the mouth, and have not one word to say. [*Aside.*

Aram. I hope my fool has not confidence enough to be troublesome. [*Aside.*

Sir Jos. Hem—Pray, madam, which way is the wind?

Aram. A pithy question—Have you sent your wits for a venture, sir, that you enquire?

Sir Jo. Nay, now I'm in—I can prattle like a magpie. [*Aside.*

Enter SHARPER *and* VAINLOVE, *at a distance.*

Belin. Dear Araminta, I'm tired——

Aram. 'Tis but pulling off our masks, and obliging Vainlove to know us: I'll be rid of my fool by fair means.——Well, Sir Joseph, you shall see my face—but be gone immediately: I see one that will be jealous, to find me in discourse with you—Be discreet—no reply; but away. [*Unmasks.*

Sir Jo. The great fortune that dined at my Lady Freelove's!——Sir Joseph, thou art a made man—Egad, I'm in love up to the ears. But I'll be discreet and husht. [*Aside.*

Bluff. Nay, by the world, I'll see your face.

Belin. You shall. [*Unmasks.*

Sharp. Ladies, your humble servant. We were afraid you would not have given us leave to know you.

Aram. We thought to have been private. But we find fools have the same advantage over a face in a mask that a coward has while the sword is in the scabbard; so were forced to draw in our own defence.

Bluff. My blood rises at that fellow: I cann't stay where he is; and I must not draw in the Park. [*To Sir* JOSEPH.

Sir Jos. I wish I durst stay to let her know my lodging. [*Exeunt Sir* JOSEPH *and* BLUFFE.

Sharp. There is in true beauty, as in courage, somewhat which narrow souls cannot dare to admire—And see, the owls are fled, as at the break of day.

Belin. Very courtly——I believe Mr Vainlove has not rubb'd his eyes since break of day neither: he looks as if he durst not approach——Nay, come, cousin, be friends with him—I swear he looks so very simply—ha, ha, ha!—Well, a lover, in the state of separation from his mistress, is like a body without a soul.—Mr Vainlove, shall I be bound for your good behaviour for the future?

Vain. Now must I pretend ignorance equal to hers, of what she knows as well as I. [*Aside.*]—Men are apt to offend, 'tis true, where they find most goodness to forgive: But, madam, I hope I shall prove of a temper not to abuse mercy, by committing new offences.

Aram. So cold! [*Aside.*

Belin. I have broke the ice for you, Mr Vainlove, and so I leave you.——Come, Mr Sharper, you and I will take a turn, and laugh at the vulgar—both the great vulgar and the small——O Gad, I have a great passion for Cowley. Don't you admire him?

Sharp. O madam, he was our English Horace.

Belin. Ah, so fine! so extremely fine! so every thing in the world that I like——O Lord, walk this way—I see a couple—I'll give you their history. [*Exeunt* BELINDA *and* SHARPER.

Vain. I find, madam, the formality of the law must be observed, though the penalty of it be dispensed with; and an offender must plead to his arraignment, though he have his pardon in his pocket.

Aram. I'm amazed! this insolence exceeds the other.——Whoever has encouraged you to this assurance, presuming upon the easiness of my temper, has much deceived you; and so you shall find.

Vain. Hey-day! which way now?—Here's fine doubling. [*Aside.*

Aram. Base man!—Was it not enough to affront me with your saucy passion?

Vain. You have given that passion a much kinder epithet than saucy, in another place.

Aram. Another place!—Some villainous design to blast my honour—But though thou hadst all the treachery and malice of thy sex, thou canst not lay a blemish on my fame—No; I have not err'd in one favourable thought of mankind. How time might have deceived me in you, I know not: my opinion was but young, and your early baseness has prevented its growing to a wrong belief.—Unworthy and ungrateful! Be gone, and never see me more.

Vain. Did I dream? or do I dream? Shall I believe my eyes or ears?—The vision is here still.—Your passion, madam, will admit of no farther reasoning—But here is a silent witness of your acquaintance.

[*Takes out the letter, and offers it: She snatches it, and throws it away.*

Aram. There's poison in every thing you touch:—Blisters will follow——

Vain. That tongue which denies what the hands have done.

Aram. Still mystically senseless and impudent.—I find I must leave the place.

Vain. No, madam; I'm gone.——She knows her name's to it, which she will be unwilling to expose to the censure of the first finder. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*

Aram. Woman's obstinacy made me blind, to what woman's curiosity now tempts me to see. [*Takes up the letter, and exit.*

Enter BELINDA *and* SHARPER.

Belin. Nay, we have spared nobody, I swear. Mr Sharper, you're a pure man; where did you get this excellent talent of railing?

Sharp. Faith, madam, the talent was born with

me.—I confess, I have taken care to improve it; to qualify me for the society of ladies.

Belin. Nay, sure railing is the best qualification in a woman's man.

Sharp. The second best—indeed I think.

Enter Footman.

Belin. How now, Pace? Where's my cousin?

Foot. She's not very well, madam, and has sent to know, if your ladyship would have the coach come again for you?

Belin. O lord, no, I'll go along with her.—— Come, Mr Sharper. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to a Chamber in* FONDLEWIFE'S *House.*

Enter LÆTITIA *and* BELLMOUR, *his cloak, hat, &c. lying loose about the chamber.*

Bell. Here's nobody, nor no noise—'twas nothing but your fears.

Læt. I durst have sworn I heard my monster's voice—I swear, I was heartily frightened—Feel how my heart beats.

Bell. 'Tis an alarm to love—Come in again, and let us—

Fond. [*Without.*] Cocky, Cocky, where are you, Cocky? I'm come home.

Læt. Ah! There he is. Make haste, gather up your things.

Fond. Cocky, Cocky, open the door.

Bell. Pox choak him! would his horns were in his throat! My patch, my patch.

[*Looking about, and gathering up his things.*

Læt. My jewel, art thou there? No matter for your patch—You s'an't tum in, Nykin—Run into my chamber, quickly, quickly. You s'an't tum in. [BELL. *goes in.*

Fond. Nay pr'ythee, dear, i'feck i'm in haste.

Læt. Then I'll let you in. [*Opens the door.*

Enter FONDLEWIFE *and Sir* JOSEPH.

Fond. Kiss, dear——I met the master of the ship by the way—And I must have my papers of accounts out of your cabinet.

Læt. Oh, I'm undone! [*Aside.*

Sir Jo. Pray, first let me have fifty pound, good alderman, for I'm in haste.

Fond. A hundred has already been paid, by your order. Fifty? I have the sum already in gold, in my closet. [*Goes into his closet.*

Sir Jo. 'Agad, it's a curious fine, pretty rogue; I'll speak to her—Pray, madam, what news d'ye hear?

Læt. Sir, I seldom stir abroad.

[*Walks about in disorder.*

Sir Jo. I wonder at that, madam, for 'tis most curious fine weather.

Læt. Methinks, 't has been very ill weather.

Sir Jo. As you say, madam, 'tis pretty bad weather, and has been so a great while.

Enter FONDLEWIFE.

Fond. Here are fifty pieces in this purse, Sir Joseph—If you will tarry a moment, till I fetch my papers, I'll wait upon you down stairs.

Læt. [*As* FOND. *is going into the chamber, she runs to Sir* JOSEPH, *almost pushes him down, and cries out.*] Ruined, past redemption! What shall I do——Ha! this fool may be of use. [*Aside.*]—Stand off, rude ruffian. Help me, my dear—O bless me! Why will you leave me alone with such a satyr!

Fond. Bless us! what's the matter? what's the matter?

Læt. Your back was no sooner turned, but, like a lion, he came open mouthed upon me, and would have ravished a kiss from me by main force.

Sir Jo. O lord! O terrible! Ha, ha, ha! is your wife mad, alderman?

Læt. Oh! I am sick with the fright; won't you take him out of my sight?

Fond. Oh traitor! I'm astonished. Oh bloody-minded traitor!

Sir Jo. Hey-day! traitor yourself—By the lord Harry I was in most danger of being ravished, if you go to that.

Fond. Oh, how the blasphemous wretch swears! Out of my house, thou son of the whore of Babylon; offspring of Bel and the dragon—Bless us! Ravish my wife! my Dinah! Oh Shechemite! Begone I say.

Sir Jo. Why the devil's in the people, I think. [*Exit.*

Læt. Oh! won't you follow, and see him out of doors, my dear?

Fond. I'll shut this door, to secure him from coming back—Give me the key of your cabinet, Cocky—Ravish my wife before my face! I warrant he's a papist in his heart at least, if not a Frenchman.

Læt. What can I do now? [*Aside.*] Oh! my dear, I have been in such a fright, that I forgot to tell you, poor Mr Spintext has a sad fit of the cholic, and is forced to lie down upon our bed—You'll disturb him; I can tread softlier.

Fond. Alack, poor man!—No, no,—you don't know the papers—I won't disturb him; give me the key.

[*She gives him the key, goes to the chamber door, and speaks aloud.*

Læt. 'Tis nobody but Mr Fondlewife, Mr Spintext; lie still on your stomach; lying on your stomach will ease you of the cholic.

Fond. Ay, ay, lie still, lie still; don't let me disturb you. [*Goes in.*

Læt. Sure, when he does not see his face, he won't discover him. Dear fortune, help me but this once, and I'll never run in thy debt again—But this opportunity is the devil.

FONDLEWIFE *returns with papers.*

Fond. Good lack, good lack!——I profess the poor man is in great torment; he lies as flat—— Dear, you should heat a trencher, or a napkin—Where's Deborah? let her clap a warm thing to

his stomach, or chafe it with a warm hand, rather than fail. What book's this?

[*Sees the book that* BELLMOUR *forgot.*

Læt. Mr Spintext's prayer-book, dear—Pray heaven it be a prayer-book! [*Aside.*

Fond. Good man! I warrant he dropped it on purpose, that you might take it up, and read some of the pious ejaculations. [*Taking up the book.*] O bless me! O monstrous! A prayer-book! Ay, this is the devil's pater-noster. Hold, let me see; The Innocent Adultery.

Læt. Misfortune! now all's ruined again. [*Aside.*

Bell. [*Peeping.*] Damned chance! If I had gone a-whoring with the Practice of Piety in my pocket, I had never been discovered.

Fond. Adultery, and innocent! O lord! Here's doctrine! Ay, here's discipline!

Læt. Dear husband, I'm amazed:——Sure it is a good book, and only tends to the speculation of sin.

Fond. Speculation! No, no; something went farther than speculation when I was not to be let in——Where is this apocryphal elder? I'll ferret him.

Læt. I'm so distracted, I cann't think of a lie. [*Aside.*

FONDLEWIFE *hauling out* BELLMOUR.

Fond. Come out here, thou Ananias incarnate—Who? how now? who have we here?

Læt. Ha! [*Shrieks, as surprised.*

Fond. Oh, thou salacious woman! Am I then brutified? Ay, I feel it here; I sprout, I bud, I blossom, I am ripe horn-mad. But who in the devil's name, are you? Mercy on me for swearing! But——

Læt. Oh, goodness keep us! Who's this? Who are you? What are you?

Bell. Soh.

Læt. In the name of the——Oh! good, my dear, don't come near it; I'm afraid it is the devil; indeed it has hoofs, dear.

Fond. Indeed, and I have horns, dear—The devil, no, I'm afraid, 'tis the flesh, thou harlot.—Dear, with the pox. Come, syren, speak, confess, who is this reverend, brawny pastor?

Læt. Indeed, and indeed now, my dear Nykin—I never saw this wicked man before.

Fond. Oh, it is a man then, it seems.

Læt. Rather, sure, it is a wolf in the cloathing of a sheep.

Fond. Thou art a devil in his proper cloathing, woman's flesh. What, you know nothing of him, but his fleece here? You don't love mutton? you Magdalen unconverted.

Bell. Well, now I know my cue: That is, very honourably to excuse her, and very impudently accuse myself. [*Aside.*

Læt. Why then, I wish I may never enter into the heaven of your embraces again, my dear, if ever I saw his face before.

Fond. O Lord! O strange!—I am in admiration of your impudence. Look at him a little better; he is more modest, I warrant you, than to deny it. Come, were you two never face to face before? speak.

Bell. Since all artifice is vain, and I think myself obliged to speak the truth in justice to your wife,——No.

Fond. Humph.

Læt. No, indeed, indeed, dear.

Fond. Nay, I find you are both in a story, that I must confess. But, what—not to be cured of the cholic? Don't you know your patient, Mrs Quack? Oh, lie upon your stomach; lying upon your stomach will cure you of the cholic. Ah! I wish he has lain upon no body's stomach but his own. Answer me that, Jezabel?

Læt. Let the wicked man answer for himself; does he think that I have nothing to do, but to excuse him? 'tis enough, if I can clear my own innocence to my own dear.

Bell. By my troth, and so 'tis—I have been a little too backward, that's the truth on't.

Fond. Come, sir, who are you, in the first place? and what are you?

Bell. A whoremaster.

Fond. Very concise.

Læt. O beastly, impudent creature!

Fond. Well, sir, and what came you hither for?

Bell. To lie with your wife.

Fond. Good again. A very civil person this, and I believe speaks truth.

Læt. Oh, insupportable impudence!

Fond. Well, sir, pray be covered——and you have—Heh! You have finished the matter, heh? And I am, as I should be, a sort of a civil perquisite to a whoremaster, called a cuckold, heh. Is it not so? Come, I'm inclining to believe every word you say.

Bell. Why, faith I must confess, so I design'd you—But you were a little unlucky in coming so soon, and hindered the making of your own fortune.

Fond. Humph! nay, if you mince the matter once, and go back of your word, you are not the person I took you for. Come, come, go on boldly.—What, don't be ashamed of your profession—Confess, confess, I shall love thee the better for it—I shall, i'feck.—What, dost think I don't know how to behave myself in the employment of a cuckold, and have been three years apprentice to matrimony? Come, come, plain-dealing is a jewel.

Bell. Well, since I see thou art a good honest fellow, I'll confess the whole matter to thee.

Fond. Oh, I am a very honest fellow——You never lay with an honester man's wife in your life.

Læt. How my heart aches! All my comfort lies in his impudence, and, heaven be praised, he has a considerable portion. [*Aside.*

Bell. In short then, I was informed of the opportunity of your absence, by my spy, (for faith, honest Isaac, I have a long time designed thee this favour) I knew Spintext was to come by your direction.——But I laid a trap for him, and procured his habit; in which, I passed upon your servants, and was conducted hither. I pretended

a fit of the cholic, to excuse my lying down upon your bed; hoping that, when she heard of it, her good-nature would bring her to administer remedies for my distemper.—You know what might have followed—But, like an uncivil person, you knocked at the door before your wife was come to me.

Fond. Ha! This is apocryphal; I may choose whether I will believe it or no.

Bell. That you may, faith, and I hope you won't believe a word on't—but I cann't help telling the truth for my life.

Fond. How! would you not have me believe, say you?

Bell. No; for then you must of consequence part with your wife, and there will be some hopes of having her upon the public; then the encouragement of a separate maintenance———

Fond. No, no, for that matter—when she and I part, she'll carry her separate maintenance about her.

Læt. Ah, cruel dear, how can you be so barbarous? You'll break my heart, if you talk of parting. [*Cries.*

Fond. Ah! dissembling vermin!

Bell. How canst thou be so cruel, Isaac? Thou hast the heart of a mountain-tiger. By the faith of a sincere sinner, she's innocent for me. Go to him, madam, fling your snowy arms about his stubborn neck; [*She goes, and hangs upon his neck, and kisses him.* BELL. *kisses her hand behind* FONDLEWIFE'S *back.*] bathe his relentless face in your salt trickling tears.—So, a few soft words, and a kiss, and the good man melts. See how kind nature works, and boils over in him.

Læt. Indeed, my dear, I was but just come down stairs, when you knocked at the door; and the maid told me Mr Spintext was ill of the cholic upon our bed.—And won't you speak to me, cruel Nykin? indeed I'll die, if you don't.

Fond. Ah! No, no, I cannot speak, my heart's so full—I have been a tender husband, a tender yoke-fellow, you know I have——but thou hast been a faithless Dalilah, and the Philistines have been upon thee. Heh! Art thou not vile and unclean, heh? speak. [*Weeping.*

Læt. No—h. [*Sighing.*

Fond. Oh, that I could believe thee!

Læt. Oh, my heart will break. [*Seeming to faint.*

Fond. Heh, how! No, stay, stay, I will believe thee, I will——Pray bend her forward, sir.

Læt. Oh! oh! where is my dear?

Fond. Here, here; I do believe thee—I won't believe my own eyes.

Bell. For my part, I am so charmed with the love of your turtle to you, that I'll go and solicit matrimony with all my might and main.

Fond. Well, well, sir; as long as I believe it, 'tis well enough. No thanks to you, sir, for her virtue.—But, I'll show you the way out of my house, if you please. Come, my dear. Nay, I will believe thee, I do, i'feck.

Bell. See the great blessing of an easy faith; opinion cannot err.

No husband, by his wife, can be deceived;
She still is virtuous, if she's so believed.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter BELLMOUR *in fanatic Habit, and* SETTER.

Bell. Setter! well encounter'd.

Set. Joy of your return, sir. Have you made a good voyage? Or have you brought your own lading back?

Bell. No, I have brought nothing but ballast back—made a delicious voyage, Setter; and might have rode at anchor in the port till this time, but the enemy surprised us—I would unrig.

Set. I attend you, sir.

[HEARTWELL *and* LUCY *appear at* SILVIA'S *Door.*

Bell. Ha! Is not that Heartwell at Silvia's door? Begone quickly, I'll follow you:—I would not be known. [*Exit* SETTER.] Pox take 'em! they stand just in my way.

Heart. I'm impatient till it be done.

Lucy. That may be, without troubling yourself to go again for your brother's chaplain. Don't you see that stalking form of godliness?

Heart. O, pox! he's a fanatic.

Lucy. An executioner, qualified to do your business. He has been lawfully ordain'd.

Heart. I'll pay him well, if you'll break the matter to him.

Lucy. I warrant you—Do you go and prepare your bride. [*Exit* HEARTWELL.

Bell. Humph, sits the wind there?——What a lucky rogue am I! Oh, what sport will be here, if I can persuade this wench to secrecy!

Lucy. Sir: reverend sir—

Bell. Madam. [*Discovers himself.*

Lucy. Now, goodness have mercy upon me! Mr Bellmour, is it you?

Bell. Even I. What dost think?

Lucy. Think! that I should not believe my eyes, and that you are not what you seem to be.

Bell. True. But, to convince thee who I am, thou knowest my old token. [*Kisses her.*

Lucy. Nay, Mr Bellmour—O Lard! I believe you are a parson in good earnest, you kiss so devoutly.

Bell. Well, your business with me, Lucy?

Lucy. I had none, but through mistake.

Bell. Which mistake you must go through

with, Lucy——Come, I know the intrigue between Heartwell and your mistress; and you mistook me for Tribulation Spintext, to marry 'em.—Ha? Are not matters in this posture? Confess:——Come, I'll be faithful; I will i'faith.—What, diffide in me, Lucy?

Lucy. Alas-a-day! you and Mr Vainlove between you have ruin'd my poor mistress: You have made a gap in her reputation; and can you blame her if she stop it up with a husband?

Bell. Well, is it as I say?

Lucy. Well, it is then: But you'll be secret.

Bell. Poh, secret! ay:—and, to be out of thy debt, I'll trust thee with another secret. Your mistress must not marry Heartwell, Lucy.

Lucy. How! O Lord——

Bell. Nay, don't be in a passion, Lucy—I'll provide a fitter husband for her.—Come, here's earnest of my good intentions for thee too; let this mollify. [*Gives her money.*] Look you, Heartwell is my friend; and, though he be blind, I must not see him fall into the snare, and unwittingly marry a whore.

Lucy. Whore! I'd have you to know my mistress scorns——

Bell. Nay, nay: Look you, Lucy; there are whores of as good quality.—But to the purpose, if you will give me leave to acquaint you with it. Do you carry on the mistake of me; I'll marry 'em.—Nay, don't pause; If you do, I'll spoil all.—I have some private reasons for what I do, which I'll tell you within. In the mean time, I promise, and rely upon me, to help your mistress to a husband: Nay, and thee too, Lucy—here's my hand, I will; with a fresh assurance.

[*Gives her more money.*

Lucy. Ah, the devil is not so cunning!—You know my easy nature.—Well, for once I venture to serve you; but if you do deceive me, the curse of all kind, tender-hearted women light upon you!

Bell. That's as much as to say, the pox take me.—Well, lead on. [*Exeunt.*

Enter VAINLOVE, SHARPER, *and* SETTER.

Sharp. Just now, say you, gone in with Lucy?

Set. I saw him, sir, and stood at the corner where you found me, and overheard all they said. Mr Bellmour is to marry 'em.

Sharp. Ha, ha! 'Twill be a pleasant cheat—I'll plague Heartwell when I see him. Pr'ythee, Frank, let's teaze him, make him fret till he foam at the mouth, and disgorge his matrimonial oath with interest.—Come, thou'rt so musty.

Set. [*To* SHARPER.] Sir, a word with you.

[*Whispers him.*

Vain. Sharper swears she has forsworn the letter—I'm sure he tells me truth; but I am not sure she told him truth: Yet she was unaffectedly concerned, he says, and often blush'd with anger and surprise.—And so I remember, in the Park.—She had reason, if I wrong her——I begin to doubt?

Sharp. Say'st thou so!

Set. This afternoon, sir, about an hour before my master received the letter.

Sharp. In my conscience, like enough.

Set. Ay, I know her, sir; at least I'm sure I can fish it out of her: she's the very sluice to her lady's secrets:—'Tis but setting her mill a-going, and I can drain her of 'em all.

Sharp. Here, Frank, your blood-hound has made out the fault; this letter, that so sticks in thy maw, is counterfeit; only a trick of Silvia in revenge, contrived by Lucy.

Vain. Ha! it has a colour—But how do you know it, sirrah?

Set. I do suspect as much; because why, sir—she was pumping me about how your worship's affairs stood towards madam Araminta; as, when you had seen her last? when you were to see her next? and where you were to be found at that time? and such like.

Vain. And where did you tell her?

Set. In the Piazza.

Vain. There I received the letter—It must be so—And why did you not find me out, to tell me this before, sot?

Set. Sir, I was pimping for Mr Bellmour.

Sharp. You were well employed—I think there is no objection to the excuse.

Vain. Pox o' my saucy credulity——If I have lost her, I deserve it. But if confession and repentance be of force, I'll win her, or weary her into a forgiveness. [*Exit.*

Sharp. Methinks I long to see Bellmour come forth.

Enter BELLMOUR.

Set. Talk of the devil——see where he comes.

Sharp. Hugging himself in his prosperous mischief—No real fanatic can look better pleased after a successful sermon of sedition.

Bell. Sharper! fortify thy spleen: Such a jest! Speak when thou art ready.

Sharp. Now, were I ill-natured, would I utterly disappoint thy mirth: Hear thee tell thy mighty jest, with as much gravity as a bishop hears venereal causes in the spiritual court: Not so much as wrinkle my face with one smile; but let thee look simply, and laugh by thyself.

Bell. Pshaw, no; I have a better opinion of thy wit——Gad, I defy thee——

Sharp. Were it not loss of time, you should make the experiment. But honest Setter here overheard you with Lucy, and has told me all.

Bell. Nay then, I thank thee for not putting me out of countenance. But, to tell you something you don't know—I got an opportunity (after I married 'em) of discovering the cheat to Silvia. She took it at first, as another woman would the like disappointment; but my promise to make her amends quickly with another husband, somewhat pacified her.

Sharp. But how the devil do you think to acquit yourself of your promise? Will you marry her yourself?

Bell. I have no such intentions at present—

Pr'ythee, wilt thou think a little for me? I am sure the ingenious Mr Setter will assist.

Set. O Lord, sir!

Bell. I'll leave him with you, and go shift my habit. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir JOSEPH *and* BLUFFE.

Sharp. Heh! Sure Fortune has sent this fool hither on purpose. Setter, stand close; seem not to observe 'em, and, hark'e— [*Whispers.*

Bluff. Fear him not. I am prepared for him now; and he shall find he might have safer roused a sleeping lion!

Sir Jos. Hush, hush! don't you see him?

Bluff. Shew him to me. Where is he?

Sir Jos. Nay, don't speak so loud——I don't jest, as I did a little while ago——Look yonder—'Egad, if he should hear the lion roar, he'd cudgel him into an ass, and his primitive braying. Don't you remember the story in Æsop's Fables, bully? 'Egad, there are good morals to be pick'd out of Æsop's Fables, let me tell you that; and Reynard the Fox too.

Bluff. Damn your morals!

Sir Jos. Pr'ythee, don't speak so loud.

Bluff. Damn your morals! I must revenge the affront done to my honour. [*In a low voice.*

Sir Jos. Ay: Do, do, captain, if you think fitting—You may dispose of your own flesh as you think fitting, d'ye see! But, by the Lord Harry, I'll leave you. (*Stealing away upon his tip-toes.*

Bluff. Prodigious! What, will you forsake your friend in extremity? You cann't in honour refuse to carry him a challenge?

[*Almost whispering, and treading softly after him.*

Sir Jos. Pr'ythee, what do you see in my face, that looks as if I would carry a challenge? Honour is your province, captain; take it—All the world know me to be a knight, and a man of worship.

Set. I warrant you, sir, I'm instructed.

Sharp. Impossible! Araminta take a liking to a fool! [*Aloud.*

Set. Her head runs on nothing else, nor she can talk of nothing else.

Sharp. I know she commended him all the while we were in the Park; but I thought it had been only to make Vainlove jealous———

Sir Jos. How's this! Good bully, hold your breath, and let's hearken. 'Egad this must be I.—

Sharp. Death, it cann't be.——An oaf, an idiot, a wittol.

Sir Jos. Ay, now it's out; 'tis I, my own individual person.

Sharp. A wretch, that has flown for shelter to the lowest shrub of mankind, and seeks protection from a blasted coward.

Sir Jos. That's you, bully Back.

[BLUFFE *frowns upon Sir* JOSEPH.

Sharp. She has given Vainlove her promise to marry him before to-morrow morning.——Has she not?

Set. She has, sir; and I have it in charge to attend her all this evening, in order to conduct her to the place appointed.

Sharp. Well, I'll go and inform your master; and do you press her to make all the haste imaginable. [*Exit.*

Set. Were I a rogue now, what a noble prize could I dispose of! A goodly pinnace, richly laden, and to launch forth under my auspicious convoy. Twelve thousand pounds, and all her rigging; besides what lies concealed under hatches.—Ha! All this committed to my care! Avaunt, temptation!——Setter, shew thyself a person of worth; be true to thy trust, and be reputed honest. Reputed honest! hum! Is that all? Ay: For to be honest is nothing; the reputation of it is all. Repu ation! What have such poor rogues as I to do with reputation? 'tis above us; and for men of quality, they are above it; so that reputation is e'en as foolish as honesty. And for my part, if I meet Sir Joseph with a purse of gold in his hand, I'll dispose of mine to the best advantage.

Sir Jos. Heh, heh, heh! Here 'tis for you, i'faith, Mr Setter. Nay, I'll take you at your word. [*Chunking a purse.*

Set. Sir Joseph and the captain too! Undone, undone! I'm undone, my master's undone, my lady's undone, and all the business is undone.

Sir Jos. No, no, never fear, man, the lady's business shall be done. What——Come, Mr Setter, I have overheard all, and to speak is but loss of time; but, if there be occasion, let these worthy gentlemen intercede for me. [*Gives him gold.*

Set. O Lord, sir, what do you mean? Corrupt my honesty!——They have indeed very persuading faces. But———

Sir Jos. 'Tis too little; there's more, man. There, take all——Now——

Set. Well, Sir Joseph, you have such a winning way with you——

Sir Jos. And how, and how, good Setter, did the little rogue look, when she talk'd of Sir Joseph? Did not her eyes twinkle, and her mouth water? Did not she pull up her little bubbies? And—'egad, I'm so overjoy'd—and stroke down her belly? and then step aside to tie her garter, when she was thinking of her love, heh, Setter?

Set. Oh, yes, sir!

Sir Jos. How now, bully? What, melancholy, because I'm in the lady's favour?—No matter, I'll make your peace—I know they were a little smart upon you——But I warrant I'll bring you into the lady's good graces.

Bluff. Pshaw, I have petitions to shew from other-guess toys than she. Look here; these were sent me this morning—There, read, [*Shows letters.*] That—that's a scrawl of quality. Here, here's from a countess too. Hum——No, hold—that's from a knight's wife; she sent it me by her husband—But here—But these are from persons of great quality.

Sir Jos. They are either from persons of great quality, or no quality at all, 'tis such a damn'd ugly hand.

[*While Sir* JOSEPH *reads,* BLUFFE *whispers* SETTER.

Set. Captain, I would do any thing to serve you; but this is so difficult———

Bluff. Not at all! Don't I know him?

Set. You'll remember the conditions?——

Bluff. I'll give 't you under my hand——In the mean time, here's earnest. [*Gives him money.*]—Come, knight, I'm capitulating with Mr Setter for you.

Sir Jos. Ah, honest Setter——Sirrah, I'll give thee any thing but a night's lodging. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SHARPER, *tugging in* HEARTWELL.

Sharp. Nay, pr'ythee leave railing, and come along with me: May be she mayn't be within; 'tis but to yon corner-house.

Heart. Whither? Whither? Which corner-house?

Sharp. Why, there: The Two White Posts.

Heart. And who would you visit there, say you?—O'ons, how my heart aches!

Sharp. Pshaw! thou'rt so troublesome and inquisitive——Why, I'll tell you; 'tis a young creature that Vainlove debauch'd, and has forsaken. Did you never hear Bellmour chide him about Silvia?

Heart. Death and hell, and marriage! My wife! [*Aside.*

Sharp. Why, thou art as musty as a new-married man, that had found his wife knowing the first night.

Heart. Hell and the devil! Does he know it? But hold——if he should not, I were a fool to discover it——I'll dissemble, and try him. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha! Why, Tom, is that such an occasion of melancholy? Is it such uncommon mischief?

Sharp. No, faith; I believe not.—Few women but have their year of probation, before they are cloister'd in the narrow joys of wedlock. But, pr'ythee, come along with me, or I'll go and have the lady to myself by the way, George. [*Going.*

Heart. O torture! How he racks and tears me!——Death! Shall I own my shame, or wittingly let him go and whore my wife? No, that's insupportable———Oh, Sharper!

Sharp. How now?

Heart. Oh, I am—married!

Sharp. Now hold, spleen!—Married!

Heart. Certainly, irrecoverably married.

Sharp. Heaven forbid, man! How long?

Heart. Oh, an age, an age! I have been married these two hours.

Sharp. My old bachelor married! that were a jest. Ha, ha, ha!

Heart. Death! D'ye mock me? Hark ye, if either you esteem my friendship, or your own safety, come not near that house—that corner-house—that hot brothel. Ask no questions. [*Exit.*

Sharp. Mad, by this light.

Thus grief still treads upon the heels of pleasure:
Married in haste, we may repent at leisure.

SETTER *entering.*

Set. Some by experience find those words misplaced;
At leisure married, they repent in haste.
As I suppose my master Heartwell.

Sharp. Here again, my Mercury!

Set. Sublimate, if you please, sir; I think my achievements do deserve the epithet—Mercury was a pimp too, but, though I blush to own it, at this time, I must confess I am somewhat fallen from the dignity of my function, and do condescend to be scandalously employed in the promotion of vulgar matrimony.

Sharp. As how, dear dexterous pimp?

Set. Why, to be brief, (for I have weighty affairs depending,) our stratagem succeeded as you intended—Bluffe turns arrant traitor; bribes me to make a private conveyance of the lady to him, and put a sham-settlement upon Sir Joseph.

Sharp. O rogue! Well, but I hope———

Set. No, no; never fear me, sir——I privately informed the knight of the treachery; who has agreed seemingly to be cheated, that the captain may be so in reality.

Sharp. Where's the bride?

Set. Shifting cloaths for the purpose, at a friend's house of mine. Here's company coming; if you'll walk this way, sir, I'll tell you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter BELLMOUR, BELINDA, ARAMINTA, *and* VAINLOVE.

Vain. Oh, 'twas a frenzy all: Cannot you forgive it?—Men in madness have a title to your pity. [*To* ARAMINTA.

Aram. Which they forfeit, when they are restored to their senses.

Vain. I am not presuming beyond a pardon.

Aram. You who could reproach me with one counterfeit, how insolent would a real pardon make you! But there's no need to forgive what is not worth my anger.

Belin. O! my conscience, I could find in my heart to marry thee, purely to be rid of thee——At least, thou art so troublesome a lover, there's hopes thou'lt make a more than ordinary quiet husband. [*To* BELLMOUR.

Bell. Say you so?——Is that a maxim among ye?

Belin. Yes; you flattering men of the mode have made marriage a mere French dish.

Bell. I hope there's no French sauce. [*Aside.*

Belin. You are so curious in the preparation, that is, your courtship, one would think you meant a noble entertainment; but when we come to feed, 'tis all froth, and poor, but in show: nay, often only remains, which have been I know not how many times warmed for other company, and at last served up cold to the wife.

Bell. That were a miserable wretch indeed, who could not afford one warm dish for the wife of his bosom—But you timorous virgins form a dreadful chimera of a husband, as of a creature

contrary to that soft, humble, pliant, easy thing, a lover, so guess at plagues in matrimony, in opposition to the pleasures of courtship. Alas! courtship to marriage, is but as the music in the play-house, till the curtain's drawn; but that once up, then opens the scene of pleasure.

Belin. Oh, foh—no: rather, courtship to marriage, is a very witty prologue to a very dull play.

Enter SHARPER.

Sharp. Hist, Bellmour! if you'll bring the ladies, make haste to Silvia's lodgings, before Heartwell has fretted himself out of breath.—I'm in haste now, but I'll come in at the catastrophe. [*Exit.*

Bell. You have an opportunity now, madam, to revenge yourself upon Heartwell, for affronting your squirrel. [*To* BELINDA.

Belin. O the filthy rude beast!

Aram. 'Tis a lasting quarrel: I think he has never been at our house since.

Bell. But give yourselves the trouble to walk to that corner-house, and I'll tell you by the way what may divert and surprise you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to* SILVIA'S *Lodging.*

Enter HEARTWELL *and Boy.*

Heart. Gone forth, say you, with her maid?

Boy. There was a man, too, that fetched 'em out—Setter, I think, they called him.

Heart. So—h——That precious pimp too——Damn'd, damn'd strumpet! Could she not contain herself on her wedding-day! Not hold out till night! Leave me. [*Exit Boy.*] O cursed state! How wide we err, when, apprehensive of the load of life,

——We hope to find
That help which nature meant in woman-kind!
To man that supplemental self design'd,
But proves a burning caustic when apply'd;
And Adam sure could, with more ease, abide
The bone when broken, than when made a bride.

Enter BELLMOUR, BELINDA, VAINLOVE, *and* ARAMINTA.

Bell. Now, George! what, rhyming? I thought the chimes of verse were past, when once the doleful marriage-knell was rung.

Heart. Shame and confusion! I am exposed. [VAINLOVE *and* ARAMINTA *talk apart.*

Belin. Joy, joy, Mr Bridegroom! I give you joy, sir!

Heart. 'Tis not in thy nature to give me joy—A woman can as soon give immortality.

Belin. Ha, ha, ha!—O Gad! men grow such clowns when they are married—

Bell. That they are fit for no company but their wives.

Belin. Nor for them neither, in a little time—I swear, at the month's end, you shall hardly find a married man that will do a civil thing to his wife, or say a civil thing to any body else. Jesu! how he looks already. Ha, ha, ha!

Bell. Ha, ha, ha!

Heart. Death! am I made your laughing-stock? For you, sir, I shall find a time; but take off your wasp here, or the clown may grow boisterous:—I have a fly-flap.

Belin. You have occasion for't; your wife has been blown upon.

Bell. That's home.

Heart. Not fiends or furies could have added to my vexation, or any thing but another woman ——You've wrecked my patience: Begone, or by——

Bell. Hold, hold!—What the devil, thou wilt not draw upon a woman!

Vain. What's the matter?

Aram. Bless me! what have you done to him?

Belin. Only touched a gall'd beast till he winced.

Vain. Bellmour, give it over; you vex him too much; 'tis all serious to him.

Belin. Nay, I swear, I begin to pity him myself.

Heart. Damn your pity!—But let me be calm a little—How have I deserved this of you? Any of ye?—Sir, have I impaired the honour of your house, promised your sister marriage, and whored her?—Wherein have I injured you? Did I bring a physician to your father, when he lay expiring, and endeavour to prolong his life, and you one-and-twenty?—Madam, have I had an opportunity with you and baulked it? Did you ever offer me the favour that I refused it? Or——

Belin. Oh foh! What does the filthy fellow mean? Lard, let me be gone!

Aram. Hang me if I pity you; you are right enough served.

Bell. This is a little scurrilous though.

Vain. Nay, 'tis a sore of your own scratching—Well, George,——

Heart. You are the principal cause of all my present ills. If Silvia had not been your whore, my wife might have been honest.

Vain. And if Silvia had not been your wife, my whore might have been just—There we are even—But have a good heart: I heard of your misfortune, and come to your relief.

Heart. When execution's over, you offer a reprieve.

Vain. What would you give?

Heart. Oh! any thing, every thing, a leg or an arm: Nay, I would be divorced from my virility, to be divorced from my wife.

Enter SHARPER.

Vain. Faith that's a sure way—But here's one can sell you freedom better cheap.

Sharp. Vainlove, I have been a kind of a god-father to you yonder; I have promised and vowed some things in your name, which I think you are bound to perform.

Vain. No signing to a blank, friend.

Sharp. No, I'll deal fairly with you——'Tis a

full and free discharge to Sir Joseph Wittol and Captain Bluffe, for all injuries whatsoever done unto you by them, until the present date hereof —How say you?

Vain. Agreed.

Sharp. Then let me beg these ladies to wear their masks a moment. [*Exit.*

Heart. What the devil's all this to me?

Vain. Patience.

Re-enter SHARPER, *with Sir* JOSEPH, BLUFFE, SILVIA, LUCY, *and* SETTER.

Bluff. All injuries whatsoever, Mr Sharper.

Sir Jos. Ay, ay, whatsoever, captain! stick to that;—whatsoever!

Sharp. 'Tis done; those gentlemen are witnesses to the general release.

Vain. Ay, ay, to this instant moment—I have past an act of oblivion.

Bluff. 'Tis very generous, sir, since I needs must own——

Sir Jos. No, no, captain, you need not own, heh, heh, heh! 'Tis I must own.

Bluff. That you are over-reach'd too, ha, ha, ha! Only a little art military used—only undermined, or so, as shall appear by the fair Araminta, my wife's permission. Oh, the devil, cheated at last! [LUCY *unmasks.*

Sir Jos. Only a little art military trick, captain; only countermined, or so—Mr Vainlove, I suppose you know whom I have got—now—but all's forgiven.

Vain. I know whom you have not got; pray, ladies, convince him.

[ARAMINTA *and* BELINDA *unmask.*

Sir Jos. Ah! O Lord, my heart aches——Ah! Setter, a rogue of all sides.

Sharp. Sir Joseph, you had better have pre-engaged this gentleman's pardon: For, though Vainlove be so generous to forgive the loss of his mistress, I know not how Heartwell may take the loss of his wife. [SILVIA *unmasks.*

Heart. My wife! By this light 'tis she, the very cockatrice——Oh, Sharper! let me embrace thee—But art thou sure she is really married to him?

Set. Really and lawfully married, I am witness.

Sharp. Bellmour will unriddle to you.

[HEARTWELL *goes to* BELLMOUR.

Sir Jos. Pray, madam, who are you? for I find you and I are like to be better acquainted.

Silv. The worst of me is, that I am your wife——

Sharp. Come, Sir Joseph, your fortune is not so bad as you fear—A fine lady, and a lady of very good quality.

Sir Jos. Thanks to my knighthood, she's a lady——

Vain. That deserves a fool with a better title —Pray use her as my relation, or you shall hear on't.

Bluff. What, are you a woman of quality too, spouse?

Set. And my relation; pray let her be respected accordingly—Well, honest Lucy, fare thee well—I think you and I have been play-fellows off and on, any time this seven years.

Lucy. Hold your prating——I'm thinking what vocation I shall follow, while my spouse is planting laurels in the wars.

Bluff. No more wars; spouse, no more wars—While I plant laurels for my head abroad, I may find the branches sprout at home.

Heart. Bellmour, I approve thy mirth, and thank thee—And I cannot in gratitude (for I see which way thou art going) see thee fall into the same snare, out of which thou hast deliver'd me.

Bell. I thank thee, George, for thy good intention—But there is a fatality in marriage——For I find I'm resolute.

Heart. Then good counsel will be thrown away upon you—For my part I have once escaped; and when I wed again, may she be—ugly as an old bawd.

Vain. Ill-natured as an old maid——

Bell. Wanton as a young widow——

Sharp. And jealous as a barren wife.

Heart. Agreed.

Bell. Well; 'midst of these dreadful denunciations, and notwithstanding the warning and example before me, I commit myself to lasting durance.

Belin. Prisoner, make much of your fetters.

[*Giving her hand.*

Bell. Frank, will you keep us in countenance?

Vain. May I presume to hope so great a blessing?

Aram. We had better take the advantage of a little of our friend's experience first.

Bell. O' my conscience she dare not consent, for fear he should recant. [*Aside.*] Well, we shall have your company to church in the morning—May be it may get you an appetite, to see us fall to before ye. Setter, did not you tell me——

Set. They're at the door: I'll call 'em in.

[*A Dance.*

Bell. Now set me forward on a journey for life——Come, take your fellow-travellers. Old George, I'm sorry to see thee still plod on alone.

Heart. With gaudy plumes and jingling bells made proud,
The youthful beast sets forth, and neighs aloud.
A morning sun his tinsell'd harness gilds,
And the first stage a down-hill green-sward yields.
But, oh———
What rugged ways attend the noon of life!
Our sun declines, and with what anxious strife,
What pain, we tug that galling load, a wife.
All coursers the first heat with vigour run;
But 'tis with whip and spur the race is won.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS BARRY.

As a rash girl, who will all hazards run,
And be enjoy'd, though sure to be undone;
Soon as her curiosity is over,
Would give the world she could her toy recover:
So fares it with our poet; and I'm sent
To tell you, he already does repent:
Would you were all as forward to keep Lent.
Now the deed's done, the giddy thing has leisure
To think o'th' sting that's in the tail of pleasure.
Methinks I hear him in consideration!
What will the world say? Where's my reputation?
Now that's at stake——No, fool, 'tis out of fashion.
If loss of that should follow want of wit,
How many undone men were in the pit!
Why that's some comfort to an author's fears,
If he's an ass, he will be tried by peers.
But hold—I am exceeding my commission;
My business here was humbly to petition:
But we're so used to rail on these occasions,
I could not help one trial of your patience:
For 'tis our way, you know, for fear o'th' worst,
To be before-hand still, and cry fool first.
How say you, sparks? How do you stand affected?
I swear young Bays within is so dejected,
'Twould grieve your hearts to see him; shall I call him?
But then you cruel critics would so maul him!
Yet, may be, you'll encourage a beginner;
But how?—Just as the devil does a sinner.
Women and wits are used e'en much as one,
You gain your ends, and damn 'em when you've done.

THE

DOUBLE DEALER.

BY

CONGREVE.

PROLOGUE.

Moors have this way (as story tells) to know
Whether their brats are truly got or no:
Into the sea the new-born babe is thrown,
There, as instinct directs, to swim or drown.
A barbarous device, to try if spouse
Has kept religiously her nuptial vows.
Such are the trials poets make of plays;
Only they trust to more inconstant seas;
So does our author this his child commit
To the tempestuous mercy of the pit,
To know if it be truly born of wit.
Critics, avaunt! for you are fish of prey,
And feed, like sharks, upon an infant play.
Be ev'ry monster of the deep away;
Let's have fair trial, and a clear sea.
Let nature work, and do not damn too soon,
For life will struggle long, ere it sink down;
And will at least rise thrice before it drown.
Let us consider, had it been our fate,
Thus hardly to be proved legitimate!
I will not say we'd all in danger been,
Were each to suffer for his mother's sin:
But by my troth I cannot avoid thinking,
How nearly some good men might have 'scaped sinking.
But, Heaven be praised, this custom is confined
Alone to the offspring of the muses' kind:
Our christian cuckolds are more bent to pity;
I know not one Moor-husband in the city.
I' th' good man's arms the chopping bastard thrives,
For he thinks all his own that is his wife's.
Whatever fate is for this play designed,
The poet's sure he shall some comfort find:
For if his muse has play'd him false, the worst
That can befall him is,—to be divorced;
You husbands judge, if that be to be cursed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MASKWELL, *a Villain; pretended Friend to Mellefont, Gallant to Lady Touchwood, and in love with Cynthia.*

Lord TOUCHWOOD, *Uncle to Mellefont.*

MELLEFONT, *promised to, and in love with Cynthia.*

CARELESS, *his Friend.*

Lord FROTH, *a solemn Coxcomb.*

BRISK.

Sir PAUL PLYANT, *an uxorious, foolish old Knight; Brother to Lady Touchwood, and Father to Cynthia.*

WOMEN.

Lady TOUCHWOOD, *in love with Mellefont.*

CYNTHIA, *Daughter to Sir Paul by a former Wife, promised to Mellefont.*

Lady FROTH, *a great Coquet; Pretender to Poetry, Wit, and Learning.*

Lady PLYANT, *insolent to her Husband, and easy to any Pretender.*

Chaplain, Boy, Footmen, and Attendants.

SCENE,—*A Gallery in Lord Touchwood's House, with Chambers adjoining.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Gallery in Lord* TOUCHWOOD'S *House, with Chambers adjoining.*

Enter CARELESS, *crossing the Stage, with his Hat, Gloves, and Sword in his Hand, as just risen from Table;* MELLEFONT *following him.*

Mel. Ned, Ned, whither so fast? What, turn'd flincher! Why, you wo' not leave us?

Care. Where are the women? I'm weary of guzzling, and begin to think them the better company.

Mel. Then thy reason staggers, and thou'rt almost drunk.

Care. No, faith, but your fools grow noisy; and if a man must endure the noise of words without sense, I think the women have more musical voices, and become the nonsense better.

Mel. Why, they are at the end of the gallery, retired to their tea and scandal, according to their ancient custom after dinner. But I made a pretence to follow you, because I had something to say to you in private, and I am not like to have many opportunities this evening.

Care. And here's this coxcomb most critically come to interrupt you.

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Boys, boys, lads, where are you? What, do you give ground? Mortgage for a bottle, ha? Careless, this is your trick, you are always spoiling company by leaving it.

Care. And thou art always spoiling company by coming into it.

Brisk. Pooh! ha, ha, ha! I know you envy me. Spite, proud spite, by the gods! and burning envy.—I'll be judged by Mellefont here, who gives and takes raillery better, you or I. Pshaw, man, when I say you spoil company by leaving it, I mean you leave nobody for the company to laugh at. I think there I was with you, ha! Mellefont.

Mel. O' my word, Brisk, that was a home thrust—You have silenced him.

Brisk. Oh, my dear Mellefont, let me perish if thou art not the soul of conversation, the very essence of wit and spirit of wine——The deuce take me, if there were three good things said, or one understood, since thy amputation from the body of our society—Eh, I think that's pretty and metaphorical enough: 'Egad, I could not have said it out of thy company—Careless; ha!

Care. Hum, what is it?

Brisk. O, *mon cœur!* What is it? Nay, gad I'll punish you for want of apprehension:—the deuce take me if I tell you.

Mel. No, no, hang him, he has no taste——But, dear Brisk, excuse me, I have a little business.

Care. Pr'ythee get thee gone: thou seest we are serious.

Mel. We'll come immediately, if you'll but go in, and keep up good humour and sense in the company: Pr'ythee do—they'll fall asleep else.

Brisk. 'Egad, so they will——Well, I will, I will; 'egad, you shall command me from the zenith to the nadir.——But the deuce take me if I say a good thing till you come. But, pr'ythee, dear rogue, make haste, pr'ythee make haste, I shall burst else.—And yonder your uncle, my lord Touchwood, swears he'll disinherit you, and Sir Paul Plyant threatens to disclaim you for a son-in-law, and my Lord Froth won't dance at your wedding to-morrow; nor, the deuce take me, I won't write your epithalamium——and see what a condition you are like to be brought to.

Mel. Well, I'll speak but three words, and follow you.

Brisk. Enough, enough. Careless, bring your apprehension along with you. [*Exit.*

Care. Pert coxcomb!

Mel. 'Faith, 'tis a good-natured coxcomb, and has very entertaining follies——You must be more humane to him; at this juncture it will do me service. I'll tell you, I would have mirth continued this day at any rate; though patience purchase folly, and attention be paid with noise.—There are times when sense may be unseasonable, as well as truth. Pr'ythee do thou wear none today, but allow Brisk to have wit, that thou mayst seem a fool.

Care. Why, how now? Why this extravagant proposition?

Mel. O, I would have no room for serious design, for I am jealous of a plot. I would have noise and impertinence keep my Lady Touchwood's head from working: for hell is not more busy than her brain, nor contains more devils than that imaginations.

Care. I thought your fear of her had been over.—Is not to-morrow appointed for your marriage with Cynthia, and her father Sir Paul Plyant come to settle the writings this day, on purpose?

Mel. True; but you shall judge whether I have not reason to be alarmed. None besides you and Maskwell are acquainted with the secret of my aunt Touchwood's violent passion for me. Since my first refusal of her addresses, she has endeavoured to do me all the ill offices with my uncle; yet has managed them with that subtilty, that to him they have borne the face of kindness, while her malice, like a dark lanthorn, only shone upon me, where it was directed. Still it gave me less perplexity to prevent the success of her displeasure, than to avoid the importunities of her love; and of two evils, I thought myself favoured in her aversion: but whether urged by her despair, and

the short prospect of time she saw to accomplish her designs; whether the hopes of revenge or of her love terminated in the view of this my marriage with Cynthia, I know not; but this morning she surprised me in my bed.——

Care. Was there ever such a fury! 'Tis well nature has not put it into her sex's power to ravish.——Well, bless us! proceed. What followed?

Mel. What at first amazed me; for I looked to have seen her in all the transports of a slighted and revengeful woman; but when I expected thunder from her voice, and lightning in her eyes, I saw her melted into tears, and hushed into a sigh. It was long before either of us spoke; passion had tied her tongue, and amazement mine.—In short, the consequence was thus: she omitted nothing that the most violent love could urge, or tender words express; which when she saw had no effect (for still I pleaded honour, and nearness of blood to my uncle) then came the storm I feared at first; for, starting from my bed-side like a fury, she flew to my sword, and with much ado I prevented her doing me or herself a mischief: having disarmed her, in a gust of passion she left me, and, in a resolution, confirmed by a thousand curses, not to close her eyes till they had seen my ruin.

Care. Exquisite woman! But what the devil, does she think that thou hast no more sense than to get an heir upon her body to disinherit thyself?—for, as I take it, this settlement upon you is with a proviso that your uncle have no children.

Mel. It is so. Well, the service you are to do me will be a pleasure to yourself; I must get you to engage my Lady Plyant all this evening, that my pious aunt may not work her to her interest. And if you chance to secure her to yourself, you may incline her to mine. She is handsome, and knows it; is very silly, and thinks she has sense, and has an old fond husband.

Care. I confess a very fair foundation for a lover to build upon.

Mel. For my Lord Froth, he and his wife will be sufficiently taken up with admiring one another, and Brisk's gallantry, as they call it. I'll observe my uncle myself; and Jack Maskwell has promised me to watch my aunt narrowly, and give me notice upon any suspicion. As for Sir Paul, my wise father-in-law that is to be, my dear Cynthia has such a share in his fatherly fondness, he would scarce make her a moment uneasy, to have her happy hereafter.

Care. So, you have manned your works; but I wish you may not have the weakest guard where the enemy is strongest.

Mel. Maskwell, you mean; pr'ythee why should you suspect him?

Care. Faith, I cannot help it; you know I never liked him; I am a little superstitious in physiognomy.

Mel. He has obligations of gratitude to bind him to me; his dependence upon my uncle is through my means.

Care. Upon your aunt, you mean.

Mel. My aunt!

Care. I am mistaken if there be not a familiarity between them you do not suspect, notwithstanding her passion for you.

Mel. Pooh, pooh! nothing in the world but his design to do me service; and he endeavours to be well in her esteem, that he may be able to effect it.

Care. Well, I shall be glad to be mistaken; but your aunt's aversion in her revenge cannot be any way so effectually shewn, as in bringing forth a child to disinherit you. She is handsome and cunning, and naturally wanton. Maskwell is flesh and blood at best, and opportunities between them are frequent. His affection to you, you have confessed, is grounded upon his interest, that you have transplanted; and, should it take root in my lady, I do not see what you can expect from the fruit.

Mel. I confess the consequence is visible, were your suspicions just.—But see, the company is broke up, let us meet them.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD, *Lord* FROTH, *Sir* PAUL PLYANT, *and* BRISK.

Ld T. Out upon 't, nephew——leave your father-in-law and me to maintain our ground against young people.

Mel. I beg your lordship's pardon—we were just returning.

Sir Paul. Were you, son? Gadsbud, much better as it is.——Good, strange! I swear I'm almost tipsy—t'other bottle would have been too powerful for me—as sure as can be it would.—We wanted your company——but Mr Brisk, where is he? I swear and vow he's a most facetious person—and the best company.—And my Lord Froth—your lordship is so merry a man, he, he, he!

Ld F. O foy, Sir Paul, what do you mean? Merry! O, barbarous! I'd as leave you had called me fool.

Sir Paul. Nay, I protest and vow now 'tis true; when Mr Brisk jokes, your lordship's laugh does so become you, he, he, he!

Ld F. Ridiculous!—Sir Paul, you're strangely mistaken; I find champagne is powerful. I assure you, Sir Paul, I laugh at nobody's jest but my own, or a lady's, I assure you, Sir Paul.

Brisk. How! how, my lord! What, affront my wit; let me perish, do I never say any thing worthy to be laughed at?

Ld F. O foy, don't misapprehend me; I don't say so, for I often smile at your conceptions. But there is nothing more unbecoming a man of quality than to laugh; 'tis such a vulgar expression of the passion! every body can laugh. Then, especially to laugh at the jest of an inferior person, or when any body else of the same quality does not laugh with one. Ridiculous! to be pleased with what pleases the crowd! Now, when I laugh, I always laugh alone!

Brisk. I suppose that's because you laugh at your own jests, 'egad, ha, ha, ha!

Ld F. He, he! I swear, though, your raillery provokes me to a smile.

Brisk. Ay, my lord, it's a sign I hit you in the teeth, if you shew 'em.

Ld F. He, he, he, I swear that's so very pretty, I cann't forbear.

Care. I find a quibble bears more sway in your lordship's face than a jest.

Ld T. Sir Paul, if you please we'll retire to the ladies, and drink a dish of tea to settle our heads.

Sir Paul. With all my heart. Mr Brisk, you'll come to us——or call me when you joke—I'll be ready to laugh incontinently.

[*Exeunt Ld* T. *and Sir* PAUL.

Mel. But does your lordship never see comedies?

Ld F. O yes, sometimes, but I never laugh.

Mel. No?

Ld F. Oh, no, never laugh indeed, sir.

Care. No! Why what d'ye go there for?

Ld F. To distinguish myself from the commonalty, and mortify the poets;—the fellows grow so conceited when any of their foolish wit prevails upon the side-boxes.—I swear—he, he, he, I have often constrained my inclinations to laugh——he, he, he, to avoid giving them encouragement.

Mel. You are cruel to yourself, my lord, as well as malicious to them.

Ld F. I confess I did myself some violence at first, but now I think I have conquered it.

Brisk. Let me perish, my lord, but there is something very particular in the humour; 'tis true, it makes against wit, and I'm sorry for some friends of mine that write, but 'egad I love to be malicious.—Nay, deuce take me, there's wit in't too——and wit must be foil'd by wit; cut a diamond with a diamond, no other way, 'egad.

Ld F. Oh, I thought you would not be long before you found out the wit.

Care. Wit! in what? Where the devil's the wit in not laughing when a man has a mind to't?

Brisk. O lord, why, cann't you find it out?—Why, there it is, in the not laughing——Don't you apprehend me?——My lord, Careless is a very honest fellow, but hark ye—you understand me? somewhat heavy, a little shallow or so. Why, I'll tell you now, suppose now you come up to me——nay, pr'ythee, Careless, be instructed. Suppose, as I was saying, you come up to me holding your sides, and laughing, as if you would——well—I look grave, and ask the cause of this immoderate mirth—you laugh on still, and are not able to tell me——still I look grave, not so much as smile——

Care. Smile? no, what the devil should you smile at, when you suppose I cann't tell you?

Brisk. Pshaw, pshaw! pr'ythee don't interrupt me. But I tell you, you shall tell me at last—but it shall be a great while first.

Care. Well; but pr'ythee don't let it be a great while, because I long to have it over.

Brisk. Well then, you tell me some good jest, or very witty thing, laughing all the while as if you were ready to die——and I hear it, and look thus——Would not you be disappointed?

Care. No; for if it were a witty thing, I should not expect you to understand it.

Ld F. O foy, Mr Careless, all the world allows Mr Brisk to have wit; my wife says he has a great deal. I hope you think her a judge.

Brisk. Pooh! my lord, his voice goes for nothing.—I cann't tell how to make him apprehend.—Take it t'other way. Suppose I say a witty thing to you?

Care. Then I shall be disappointed, indeed.

Mel. Let him alone, Brisk, he is obstinately bent not to be instructed.

Brisk. I'm sorry for him, the deuce take me.

Mel. Shall we go to the ladies, my lord?

Ld F. With all my heart—methinks we are a solitude without them.

Mel. Or, what say you to another bottle of champagne?

Ld F. O, for the universe, not a drop more, I beseech you. Oh, intemperate! I have a flushing in my face already.

[*Takes out a pocket-glass, and looks in it.*

Brisk. Let me see, let me see, my lord, I broke my glass that was in the lid of my snuff-snuff.—Hum! deuce take me, I have encouraged a pimple here too. [*Takes the glass, and looks.*

Ld F. Then you must mortify him with a patch: my wife shall supply you. Come, gentlemen, *allons*, here is company coming. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD *and* MASKWELL.

Lady T. I'll hear no more——you're false and ungrateful: Come, I know you false.

Mask. I have been frail, I confess, madam, for your ladyship's service.

Lady T. That I should trust a man whom I had known betray his friend!

Mask. What friend have I betrayed; or to whom?

Lady T. Your fond friend Mellefont, and to me——Can you deny it?

Mask. I do not.

Lady T. Have you not wronged my lord, who has been a father to you in your wants, and given you being? Have you not wronged him in the highest manner, in his bed?

Mask. With your ladyship's help, and for your service, as I told you before. I cannot deny that neither. Any thing more, madam?

Lady T. More! audacious villain. Oh, what's more is most my shame——Have you not dishonoured me?

Mask. No, that I deny; for I never told in all my life; so that accusation's answered.—On to the next.

Lady T. Death! do you dally with my passion? Insolent devil! But have a care——provoke me not; for, by the eternal fire, you shall not escape my vengeance. Calm villain! how unconcerned he stands, confessing treachery and ingratitude! Is there a vice more black?——Oh, I have excuses, thousands, for my faults; fire in my temper, passions in my soul, apt to every provocation; oppressed at once with love and with despair:—

but a sedate, a thinking villain, whose black blood runs temperately bad, what excuse can clear?

Mask. Will you be in temper, madam? I would not talk not to be heard. I have been [*She walks about disordered.*] a very great rogue for your sake, and you reproach me with it; I am ready to be a rogue still, to do you service; and you are flinging conscience and honour in my face, to rebate my inclinations. How am I to behave myself? You know I am your creature; my life and fortune in your power; to disoblige you brings me certain ruin. Allow it, I would betray you, I would not be a traitor to myself: I do not pretend to honesty, because you know I am a rascal: but I would convince you from the necessity of my being firm to you.

Lady T. Necessity, impudence! Can no gratitude incline you, no obligations touch you? Have not my fortune and my person been subjected to your pleasure? Were you not in the nature of a servant, and have I not in effect made you lord of all, of me, and of my lord? Where is that humble love, the languishing, that adoration, which once was paid me, and everlastingly engaged?

Mask. Fixed, rooted in my heart, whence nothing can remove them, yet you——

Lady T. Yet, what yet?

Mask. Nay, misconceive me not, madam, when I say I have had a generous and a faithful passion, which you had never favoured but through revenge and policy.

Lady T. Ha!

Mask. Look you, madam, we are alone.—Pray contain yourself, and hear me. You know you loved your nephew when I first sighed for you; I quickly found it; an argument that I loved: for with that art you veiled your passion, 'twas imperceptible to all but jealous eyes. This discovery made me bold, I confess it; for by it I thought you in my power.—Your nephew's scorn of you added to my hopes; I watched the occasion, and took you just repulsed by him, warm at once with love and indignation; your disposition, my arguments, and happy opportunity accomplished my design; I press'd the yielding minute, and was bless'd! How I have loved you since, words have not shown, then how should words express?

Lady T. Well, mollifying devil!—And have I not met your love with forward fire?

Mask. Your zeal I grant was ardent, but misplaced—there was revenge in view; that woman's idol had defiled the temple of the god, and love was made a mock-worship. A son and heir would have edged young Mellefont upon the brink of ruin, and left him none but you to catch at for prevention.

Lady T. Again, provoke me! Do you wind me like a larum, only to rouse my stilled soul for your diversion? Confusion!

Mask. Nay, madam, I am gone, if you relapse ——What needs this? I say nothing but what you yourself, in open hours of love, have told me. Why should you deny? Nay, how can you? Is not all this present heat owing to the same fire? Do you not love him still? How have I this day offended you, but in not breaking off his match with Cynthia? which, ere to-morrow, shall be done—had you but patience.

Lady T. How, what said you, Maskwell?—Another caprice to unwind my temper?

Mask. By heaven, no! I am your slave, the slave of all your pleasures; and will not rest till I have given you peace, would you suffer me.

Lady T. Oh, Maskwell, in vain do I disguise me from thee! thou knowest me, knowest the very inmost windings and recesses of my soul.—Oh, Mellefont! I burn!—Married to-morrow!—Despair strikes me!—Yet my soul knows I hate him too: Let him but once be mine, and next, immediate ruin seize him!

Mask. Compose yourself; you shall possess and ruin him too—Will that please you?

Lady T. How, how? thou dear, thou precious villain, how?

Mask. You have already been tampering with my Lady Plyant.

Lady T. I have: she is ready for any impression I think fit.

Mask. She must be thoroughly persuaded that Mellefont loves her.

Lady T. She is so credulous that way naturally, and likes him so well, that she will believe it faster than I can persuade her. But I don't see what you can propose from such a trifling design; for her first conversing with Mellefont will convince her of the contrary.

Mask. I know it—I don't depend upon it.—But it will prepare something else; and gain us leisure to lay a stronger plot.——If I gain a little time, I shall not want contrivance.

One minute gives invention to destroy,
What to rebuild, will a whole age employ.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Enter Lady* FROTH *and* CYNTHIA.

Cyn. Indeed, madam! Is it possible your ladyship could have been so much in love?

Lady F. I could not sleep; I did not sleep one wink for three weeks together.

Cyn. Prodigious! I wonder want of sleep, and so much love, and so much wit as your ladyship has, did not turn your brain.

Lady F. O, my dear Cynthia! you must not rally your friend—but really, as you say, I wonder too—but then I had a way. For, between you and I, I had whimsies and vapours, but I gave them vent.

Cyn. How, pray, madam?

Lady F. O, I writ, writ abundantly—Do you never write?

Cyn. Write what?

Lady F. Songs, elegies, satires, encomiums, panegyrics, lampoons, plays, or heroic poems.

Cyn. O Lord, not I, madam! I am content to be a courteous reader.

Lady F. O inconsistent! in love, and not write! If my lord and I had been both of your temper, we had never come together—O bless me! what a sad thing would that have been, if my lord and I should never have met!

Cyn. Then neither my lord nor you would ever have met with your match, on my conscience.

Lady F. O' my conscience no more we should; thou say'st right—for sure my Lord Froth is as fine a gentleman, and as much a man of quality—Ah! nothing at all of the common air—I think I may say, he wants nothing but a blue ribband and a star to make him shine the very phosphorus of our hemisphere. Do you understand those two hard words? If you don't, I'll explain them to you.

Cyn. Yes, yes, madam, I am not so ignorant—at least I won't own it, to be troubled with your instructions. [*Aside.*

Lady F. Nay, I beg your pardon; but, being derived from the Greek, I thought you might have escaped the etymology.——But I am the more amazed, to find you a woman of letters, and not write! Bless me! how can Mellefont believe you love him?

Cyn. Why, faith, madam, he that won't take my word, shall never have it under my hand.

Lady F. I vow Mellefont's a pretty gentleman, but methinks he wants a manner.

Cyn. A manner! What's that, madam?

Lady F. Some distinguishing quality, as for example, the *bel air* or *brilliant* of Mr Brisk; the solemnity, yet complaisance, of my lord, or something of his own that should look a little *je ne sçai quoi*; he is too much a mediocrity in my mind.

Cyn. He does not, indeed, affect either pertness or formality, for which I like him——Here he comes.

Enter Lord FROTH, MELLEFONT, *and* BRISK.

Impertinent creature! I could almost be angry with her now. [*Aside.*

Lady F. My lord, I have been telling Cynthia how much I have been in love with you; I swear I have; I'm not ashamed to own it now:—Ah! it makes my heart leap; I vow I sigh when I think on't:—My dear lord! ha, ha, ha!—Do you remember, my lord?

[*Squeezes him by the hand, looks kindly on him, sighs, and then laughs out.*

Ld F. Pleasant creature! Perfectly well, ah! that look! Ay, there it is; who could resist!—'Twas so my heart was made a captive at first, and ever since it has been in love with happy slavery.

Lady F. O that tongue, that dear deceitful tongue! that charming softness in your mien and your expression, and then your bow! Good, my lord, bow as you did when I gave you my picture; here, suppose this my picture. [*Gives him a pocket-glass.*] Pray mind my lord? Ah! he bows charmingly. Nay, my lord, you sha'n't kiss it so much; I shall grow jealous, I vow now.

[*He bows profoundly low, then kisses the glass.*

Ld F. I saw myself there, and kissed it for your sake.

Lady F. Ah! gallantry to the last degree—Mr Brisk, you are a judge; was ever any thing so well bred as my lord?

Brisk. Never any thing but your ladyship, let me perish.

Lady F. O prettily turned again! let me die but you have a great deal of wit.——Mr Mellefont, don't you think Mr Brisk has a world of wit?

Mel. O yes, madam.

Brisk. O dear, madam———

Lady F. An infinite deal!

Brisk. O heavens! madam———

Lady F. More wit than any body.

Brisk. I am everlastingly your humble servant, deuce take me, madam.

Ld F. Don't you think us a happy couple?

Cyn. I vow, my lord, I think you the happiest couple in the world; for you are not only happy in one another, and when you are together, but happy in yourselves, and by yourselves.

Ld F. I hope Mellefont will make a good husband too.

Cyn. 'Tis my interest to believe he will, my lord.

Ld F. D'ye think he'll love you as well as I do my wife? I am afraid not.

Cyn. I believe he'll love me better.

Ld F. Heavens! that can never be;—but why do you think so?

Cyn. Because he has not so much reason to be fond of himself.

Ld F. O, your humble servant for that, dear madam.——Well, Mellefont, you'll be a happy creature.

Mel. Ay, my lord, I shall have the same reason for my happiness that your lordship has; I shall think myself happy.

Ld F. Ah, that's all.

Brisk. [*To Lady* FROTH.] Your ladyship is in the right; but, 'egad, I'm wholly turned into satire. I confess I write but seldom, but when I do—keen iambics, 'egad. But my lord was telling me, your ladyship has made an essay toward an heroic poem.

Lady F. Did my lord tell you?—Yes, I vow, and the subject is my lord's love to me.——And what do you think I call it? I dare swear you won't guess——*The Sillabub*, ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. Because my lord's title's Froth, 'egad; ha, ha, ha! deuce take me, very *à-propos*, and surprising, ha, ha, ha!

Lady F. He! ay, is it not?——And then I call my lord Spumoso; and myself—what do you think I call myself?

Brisk. Lactilla, may be———'Egad I cannot tell.

Lady F. Biddy, that's all; just my own name.

Brisk. Biddy! 'Egad, very pretty——Deuce take me, if your ladyship has not the art of surprising the most naturally in the world—I hope you'll make me happy in communicating the poem.

Lady F. O, you must be my confidant, I must ask your advice.

Brisk. I'm your humble servant, let me perish ——I presume your ladyship has read Bossu?

Lady F. O, yes, and Rapine, and Dacier upon Aristotle and Horace.——My lord, you must not be jealous—I'm communicating all to Mr Brisk.

Ld F. No, no, I'll allow Mr Brisk; have you nothing about you to show him, my dear?

Lady F. Yes, I believe I have.——Mr Brisk, come will you go into the next room, and there I'll shew you what I have. [*Exit with* BRISK.

Ld F. I'll walk a turn in the garden, and come to you. [*Exit.*

Mel. You are thoughtful, Cynthia.

Cyn. I am thinking, though marriage makes man and wife one flesh, it leaves them still two fools; and they become more conspicuous by setting off one another.

Mel. That's only when two fools meet, and their follies are opposed.

Cyn. Nay, I have known two wits meet, and, by the opposition of their wit, render themselves as ridiculous as fools. 'Tis an odd game we are going to play at: what think you of drawing stakes, and giving over in time?

Mel. No, hang it, that's not endeavouring to win, because it is possible we may lose; since we have shuffled and cut, let's e'en turn up trump now.

Cyn. Then I find it is like cards; if either of us have a good hand, it is an accident of fortune.

Mel. No, marriage is rather like a game of bowls: fortune indeed makes the match, and the two nearest, and sometimes the two farthest, are together, but the game depends entirely upon judgment.

Cyn. Still it is a game, and consequently one of us must be a loser.

Mel. Not at all; only a friendly trial of skill, and the winnings to be laid out in an entertainment.——What's here? the music!——Oh, my lord has promised the company a new song; we'll get them to give it us by the way. [*Musicians crossing the stage.*] Pray let us have the favour of you to practise the song before the company hear it.

SONG.

Cynthia frowns whene'er I woo her,
Yet she's vex'd if I give over;
Much she fears I should undo her,
But much more to lose her lover:
Thus, in doubting, she refuses;
And not winning, thus she loses.

Pr'ythee, Cynthia, look behind you,
Age and wrinkles will o'ertake you;
Then too late desire will find you,
When the power must forsake you:
Think, O think, o' the sad condition,
To be past, yet wish fruition.

Mel. You shall have my thanks below.
[*To the Music—they go out.*

Enter Sir PAUL PLYANT *and Lady* PLYANT.

Sir Paul. Gads-bud! I am provoked into a fermentation, as my Lady Froth says; was ever the like read of in story!

Lady P. Sir Paul, have patience; let me alone to rattle him up.

Sir Paul. Pray, your ladyship, give me leave to be angry——I'll rattle him up, I warrant you; I'll firk him with a *certiorari*.

Lady P. You firk him! I'll firk him myself. Pray, Sir Paul, hold yourself contented.

Cyn. Bless me, what makes my father in such a passion!—I never saw him thus before.

Sir Paul. Hold yourself contented, my Lady Plyant——I find passion coming upon me by inflation, and I cannot submit as formerly, therefore give way.

Lady P. How now!—will you be pleased to retire, and——

Sir Paul. No, marry, will I not be pleased; I am pleased to be angry, that's my pleasure at this time.

Mel. What can this mean?

Lady P. Gads my life, the man's distracted! Why, how now, who are you?—What am I?—Slidikins, cann't I govern you?—What did I marry you for?—Am I not to be absolute and uncontroulable? Is it fit a woman of my spirit and conduct should be contradicted in a matter of this concern?

Sir Paul. It concerns me, and only me:—— Besides, I am not to be govern'd at all times. When I am in tranquillity, my Lady Plyant shall command Sir Paul; but when I am provoked to fury, I cannot incorporate with patience and reason—as soon may tigers match with tigers, lambs with lambs, and every creature couple with its foe, as the poet says.

Lady P. He's hot-headed still! 'Tis in vain to talk to you; but remember I have a curtain-lecture for you, you disobedient, headstrong brute!

Sir Paul. No, 'tis because I won't be headstrong; because I won't be a brute, and have my head fortified, that I am thus exasperated.—But I will protect my honour, and yonder is the violater of my fame.

Lady P. 'Tis my honour that is concerned, and the violation was intended to me.——Your honour! you have none but what is in my keeping, and I can dispose of it when I please—therefore don't provoke me.

Sir Paul. Hum, gads-bud, she says true—Well, my lady, march on, I will fight under you then; I am convinced as far as passion will permit.

[*Lady* PLYANT *and Sir* PAUL *come up to* MELLEFONT.

Lady P. Inhuman and treacherous——

Sir Paul. Thou serpent, and first tempter of womankind!

Cyn. Bless me, sir!—Madam, what mean you?

Sir Paul. Thy, Thy, come away Thy, touch him not; come hither, girl; go not near him; there is nothing but deceit about him; snakes are in his peruke, and the crocodile of Nilus is in his belly; he will eat thee up alive.

Lady P. Dishonourable, impudent creature!

Mel. For Heaven's sake, madam, to whom do you direct this language?

Lady P. Have I behaved myself with all the decorum and nicety befitting the person of Sir Paul's wife? Have I preserved my honour as it were in a snow-house for these three years past? Have I been white and unsullied even by Sir Paul himself?——

Sir Paul. Nay, she has been an invincible wife, even to me, that's the truth on't.

Lady P. Have I, I say, preserved myself like a fair sheet of paper, for you to make a blot upon?

Sir Paul. And she shall make a simile with any woman in England.

Mel. I am so amazed, I know not what to say.

Sir Paul. Do you think my daughter, this pretty creature——gads-bud, she's a wife for a cherubin!——Do you think her fit for nothing but to be a stalking-horse, to stand before you while you take aim at my wife?——Gads-bud, I was never angry before in my life, and I'll never be appeased again.

Mel. Hell and damnation! this is my aunt; such malice can be engender'd no where else. [*Aside.*

Lady P. Sir Paul, take Cynthia from his sight; leave me to strike him with the remorse of his intended crime.

Cyn. Pray, sir, stay, hear him; I dare affirm he's innocent.

Sir Paul. Innocent! Why, hark'ee, come hither, Thy; hark'ee, I had it from his aunt, my sister Touchwood—Gads-bud, he does not care a farthing for any thing of thee, but thy portion; why, he's in love with my wife; he would have tantalized thee, and made a cuckold of thy poor father—and that would certainly have broke my heart—I am sure if ever I should have horns they would kill me; they would never come kindly; I should die of them, like a child that was cutting his teeth—I should indeed, Thy—therefore come away; but Providence has prevented all, therefore come away when I bid you.

Cyn. I must obey. [*Exit with Sir* PAUL.

Lady P. Oh, such a thing! the impiety of it startles me—to wrong so good, so fair a creature, and one that loves you tenderly——'Tis a barbarity of barbarities, and nothing could be guilty of it——

Mel. But the greatest villain imagination can form, I grant it; and next to the villainy of such a fact, is the villainy of aspersing me with the guilt.—How?—Which way was I to wrong her?—For yet I understand you not.

Lady P. Why, gads my life, cousin Mellefont, you cannot be so peremptory as to deny it, when I tax you with it to your face; for, now Sir Paul is gone, you are *corum nobus*.

Mel. By Heaven, I love her more than life, or——

Lady P. Fiddle, faddle, don't tell me of this and that, and every thing in the world, but give me mathemacular demonstration, answer me directly——But I have not patience——Oh! the impiety of it, as I was saying, and the unparalleled wickedness!—O, merciful father!—How could you think to reverse nature so, to make the daughter the means of procuring the mother?

Mel. The daughter to procure the mother!

Lady P. Aye; for though I am not Cynthia's own mother, I am her father's wife, and that's near enough to make it incest.

Mel. Incest!—O, my precious aunt, and the devil in conjunction! [*Aside.*

Lady P. O, reflect on the horror of that, and then the guilt of deceiving every body—marrying the daughter, only to make a cuckold of the father; and then seducing me, debauching my purity, and perverting me from the road of virtue, in which I have trod thus long, and never made one trip, not one *faux pas*—O, consider it! what would you have to answer for, if you should provoke me to frailty? Alas! humanity is feeble, Heaven knows! very feeble, and unable to support itself.

Mel. Where am I? Is it day? and am I awake?—Madam——

Lady P. And nobody knows how circumstances may happen together—To my thinking, now I could resist the strongest temptation—but yet, I know 'tis impossible for me to know whether I could or not; there's no certainty in the things of this life.

Mel. Madam, pray give me leave to ask you one question——

Lady P. O Lord, ask me the question! I'll swear I'll refuse it; I swear I'll deny it—therefore don't ask me; nay, you sha'n't ask me, I swear I'll deny it.—O, Gemini! you have brought all the blood into my face; I warrant I'm as red as a turkey-cock; O fie, cousin Mellefont.

Mel. Nay, madam, hear me; I mean——

Lady P. Hear you! no, no; I'll deny you first, and hear you afterwards; for one does not know how one's mind may change upon hearing——Hearing is one of the senses, and all the senses are fallible; I won't trust my honour, I assure you; my honour is infallible and uncomatible.

Mel. For Heaven's sake, madam——

Lady P. O, name it no more—Bless me, how can you talk of Heaven, and have so much wickedness in your heart? May be you don't think it a sin——they say some of you gentlemen don't think it a sin—may be it is no sin to them that don't think it so; indeed, if I did not think it a sin——but still my honour, if it were no sin——, but then to marry my daughter for the convenience of frequent opportunities—I'll never con-

sent to that; as sure as can be, I'll break the match.

Mel. Death and amazement!—Madam, upon my knees——

Lady P. Nay, nay, rise up; come, you shall see my good-nature. I know love is powerful, and nobody can help his passion: 'tis not your fault, nor, I swear, it is not mine.—How can I help it, if I have charms? And how can you help it, if you are made a captive? I swear it is pity it should be a fault——but my honour——well, but your honour too——but the sin——well, but the necessity——O Lord, here's somebody coming; I dare not stay.——Well, you must consider of your crime, and strive as much as can be against it—strive, be sure—but don't be melancholic; don't despair—but never think that I'll grant you any thing—O Lord, no—but be sure you lay aside all thoughts of the marriage; for though I know you don't love Cynthia, only as a blind for your passion to me, yet it will make me jealous—O Lord, what did I say!—Jealous!—no, no, I cann't be jealous, for I must not love you——therefore don't hope—but don't despair neither—O, they're coming! I must fly. [*Exit.*

Mel. [*After a pause.*] So, then, spite of my care and foresight, I am caught, caught in my security.——Yet this was but a shallow artifice, unworthy of my Machiavelian aunt. There must be more behind; this is but the first flash, the priming of her engine; destruction follows hard, if not most presently prevented.

Enter MASKWELL.

—Maskwell, welcome; thy presence is a view of land, appearing to my shipwreck'd hopes; the witch has raised the storm, and her ministers have done their work; you see the vessels are parted.

Mask. I know it; I met Sir Paul towing away Cynthia. Come, trouble not your head; I'll join you together ere to-morrow morning, or drown between you and the attempt.

Mel. There's comfort in a hand stretch'd out to one that's sinking, though never so far off.

Mask. No sinking, nor no danger——Come, cheer up; why, you don't know that while I plead for you, your aunt has given me a retaining fee—nay, I am your greate t enemy, and she does but journey-work under me.

Mel. Ha!—how's this?

Mask. What do ye think of my being employ'd in the execution of all her plots?—Ha, ha, ha! by Heaven, 'tis true; I have undertaken to break the match; I have undertaken to make your uncle disinherit you, to get you turn'd out of doors, and to—ha, ha, ha! I cann't tell you for laughing——Oh, she has opened her heart to me—I am to turn you a-grazing, and to—ha, ha, ha! marry Cynthia myself; there's a plot for you.

Mel. Ha!—I see, I see my rising sun! light breaks through clouds upon me, and I shall live to day——O, my Maskwell, how shall I thank or praise thee! thou hast outwitted woman.—But tell me, how couldst thou thus get into her confidence!—Ha!—how?—But was it her contrivance to persuade my Lady Plyant into this extravagant belief?

Mask. It was; and, to tell you the truth, I encouraged it for your diversion: though it makes you a little uneasy for the present, yet the reflection of it must needs be entertaining—I warrant she was very violent at first.

Mel. Ha, ha, ha! ay, a very fury; but I was most afraid of her violence at last—If you had not come as you did, I don't know what she might have attempted.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha! I know her temper.—Well, you must know then, that all my contrivances were but bubbles; till at last I pretended to have been long secretly in love with Cynthia; that did my business; that convinced your aunt I might be trusted; since it was as much my interest as hers to break the match: then, she thought my jealousy might qualify me to assist her in her revenge; and, in short, in that belief told me the secrets of her heart. At length, we made this agreement; if I accomplish her designs, (as I told you before,) she has engaged to put Cynthia with all her fortune into my power.

Mel. She is most gracious in her favour.——Well, my dear Jack, how hast thou contrived?

Mask. I would not have you stay to hear it now, for I don't know but she may come this way; I am to meet her anon; after that, I'll tell you the whole matter: be here in this gallery an hour hence; by that time I imagine our consultation may be over.

Mel. I will: till then, success attend thee. [*Exit.*

Mask. Till then, success will attend me; for when I meet you, I meet the only obstacle to my fortune.—Cynthia, let thy beauty gild my crimes; and whatsoever I commit of treachery or deceit shall be imputed to me as a merit—Treachery! what treachery? Love cancels all the bonds of friendship, and sets men right upon their first foundations. Duty to kings, piety to parents, gratitude to benefactors, and fidelity to friends, are different and particular ties; but the name of rival cuts them all asunder, and is a general acquittance—Rival is equal, and love, like death, an universal leveller of mankind.——Ha! but is there no such thing as honesty? Yes; and whosoever has it about him, bears an enemy in his breast; for your honest man, as I take it, is that nice, scrupulous, conscientious person, who will cheat nobody but himself; such another coxcomb as your wise man, who is too hard for all the world, and will be made a fool of by nobody but himself.—Ha, ha, ha! well, for wisdom and honesty, give me cunning and hypocrisy—Oh, 'tis such a pleasure to angle for fair-faced fools!—Then that hungry gudgeon Credulity will bite at any thing——Why, let me see, I have the same face, the same words and actions, when I speak what I do think, and when I speak what I do not

think—the very same—and dear dissimulation is the only art not to be known from nature.
Why will mankind be fools, and be deceived?
And why are *friends'* and lovers' oaths believed?
When each who searches strictly his own mind,
May so much fraud and power of baseness find.
[*Exit*,

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD *and Lady* TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. My lord, can you blame my brother Plyant, if he refuse his daughter upon this provocation? The contract is void by this unheard-of impiety.

Ld T. I do not believe it true; he has better principles——pho, it is nonsense. Come, come, I know my Lady Plyant has a large eye, and would centre every thing in her own circle; it is not the first time she has mistaken respect for love, and made Sir Paul jealous of the civility of an undesigning person, the better to bespeak her security in her unfeigned pleasures.

Lady T. You censure hardly, my lord; my sister's honour is very well known.

Ld T. Yes, I believe I know some that have been familiarly acquainted with it. This is a little trick wrought by some pitiful contriver, envious of my nephew's merit.

Lady T. Nay, my lord, it may be so, and I hope it will be found so: but that will require some time; for, in such a case as this, demonstration is necessary.

Ld T. There should have been demonstration of the contrary too before it had been believed—

Lady T. So I suppose there was.

Ld T. How? Where? When?

Lady T. That I cann't tell; nay, I don't say there was—I am willing to believe as favourably of my nephew as I can.

Ld T. I do not know that. [*Half aside.*

Lady T. How? Don't you believe that, say you, my lord?

Ld T. No, I don't say so—I confess I am troubled to find you so cold in his defence.

Lady T. His defence! Bless me, would you have me defend an ill thing?

Ld T. You believe it then?

Lady T. I don't know; I am very unwilling to speak my thoughts in any thing that may be to my cousin's disadvantage; besides, I find, my lord, you are prepared to receive an ill impression from any opinion of mine which is not consenting with your own: but, since I am like to be suspected in the end, and it is a pain any longer to dissemble, I own it to you; in short, I do believe it, nay, and can believe any thing worse, if it were laid to his charge—Don't ask me my reasons, my lord, for they are not fit to be told you.

Ld T. I am amazed! Here must be something more than ordinary in this. [*Aside.*] Not fit to be told me, madam? You can have no interest wherein I am not concerned, and consequently the same reasons ought to be convincing to me, which create your satisfaction or disquiet.

Lady T. But those which cause my disquiet I am willing to have remote from your hearing. Good my lord, don't press me.

Ld T. Don't oblige me to press you.

Lady T. Whatever it was, it is past; and that is better to be unknown which cannot be prevented; therefore, let me beg you to rest satisfied.

Ld T. When you have told me, I will.

Lady T. You won't.

Ld T. By my life, my dear, I will.

Lady T. What if you cannot.

Ld T. How? Then I must know; nay, I will.—No more trifling—I charge you to tell me—By all our mutual peace to come; upon your duty———

Lady T. Nay, my lord, you need say no more to make me lay my heart before you, but don't be thus transported; compose yourself; it is not of concern to make you lose one minute's temper; 'tis not, indeed, my dear.—Nay, by this kiss, you sha'n't be angry. O lord, I wish I had not told you any thing——Indeed, my lord, you have frighted me. Nay, look pleased—I'll tell you.

Ld T. Well, well.

Lady T. Nay, but will you be calm?——Indeed it is nothing but——

Ld T. But what?

Lady T. But will you promise me not to be angry?—Nay, you must—not to be angry with Mellefont—I dare swear he's sorry—and, were it to do again, would not——

Ld T. Sorry for what? 'Sdeath! you rack me with delay.

Lady T. Nay, no great matter, only—Well, I have your promise—pho! why nothing, only your nephew had a mind to amuse himself sometimes with a little gallantry towards me. Nay, I cann't think he meant any thing seriously, but methought it looked oddly.

Ld T. Confusion and hell, what do I hear!

Lady T. Or, may be, he thought he was not enough a-kin to me upon your account, and had a mind to create a nearer relation on his own: A lover, you know, my lord—ha, ha, ha! Well, but that's all—Now you have it!—Well, remember your promise, my lord, and don't take any notice of it to him.

Ld T. No, no, no—Damnation!

Lady T. Nay, I swear you must not—a little harmless mirth—only misplaced, that's all.—But

if it were more, 'tis over now, and all is well. For my part, I have forgot it; and so has he, I hope—for I have not heard any thing from him these two days.

Ld T. These two days! Is it so fresh? Unnatural villain! 'Death, I'll have him stripped and turned naked out of my doors this moment, and let him rot and perish, incestuous brute!

Lady T. Oh, for heaven's sake, my lord, you'll ruin me if you take such public notice of it, it will be a town-talk: consider your own and my honour—Nay, I told you, you would not be satisfied when you knew it.

Ld T. Before I've done I will be satisfied.—Ungrateful monster! How long?

Lady T. Lord, I don't know—I wish my lips had grown together when I told you—Almost a twelvemonth—Nay, I won't tell you any more till you are yourself. Pray, my lord, don't let the company see you in this disorder—Yet, I confess, I cannot blame you; for I think I was never so surprised in my life—Who would have thought my nephew could have so misconstrued my kindness—But will you go into your closet, and recover your temper? I'll make an excuse of sudden business to the company, and come to you.—Pray, good, dear my lord, let me beg you do now: I'll come immediately, and tell you all——Will you, my lord?

Ld T. I will—I am mute with wonder.

Lady T. Well, but go now, here is somebody coming.

Ld T. Well, I go——You won't stay, for I would hear more of this. [*Exit.*

Lady T. I follow instantly——So.

Enter MASKWELL.

Mask. This was a master-piece, and did not need my help, though I stood ready for a cue to come in and confirm all, had there been occasion.

Lady T. Have you seen Mellefont?

Mask. I have; and am to meet him here about this time.

Lady T. How does he bear his disappointment?

Mask. Secure in my assistance, he seemed not much afflicted, but rather laughed at the shallow artifice, which so little time must of necessity discover. Yet he is apprehensive of some farther design of your's, and has engaged me to watch you. I believe he will hardly be able to prevent your plot, yet I would have you use caution and expedition.

Lady T. Expedition indeed; for all we do must be performed in the remaining part of this evening, and before the company break up, lest my lord should cool, and have an opportunity to talk with him privately—My lord must not see him again.

Mask. By no means; therefore you must aggravate my lord's displeasure to a degree that will admit of no conference with him,——What think you of mentioning me?

Lady T. How?

Mask. To my lord, as having been privy to Mellefont's design upon you, but still using my utmost endeavours to dissuade him, though my friendship and love to him has made me conceal it; yet you may say, I threatened, the next time he attempted any thing of that kind, to discover it to my lord.

Lady T. To what end is this?

Mask. It will confirm my lord's opinion of my honour and honesty, and create in him a new confidence in me, which (should this design miscarry) will be necessary to the forming another plot that I have in my head——to cheat you as well as the rest. [*Aside.*

Lady T. I'll do it—I'll tell him you hindered him once from forcing me.

Mask. Excellent! your ladyship has a most improving fancy. You had best go to my lord, keep him as long as you can in his closet, and I doubt not but you will mould him to what you please; your guests are so engaged in their own follies and intrigues, they'll miss neither of you.

Lady T. When shall we meet? At eight this evening in my chamber; there rejoice at our success, and toy away an hour in mirth. [*Exit.*

Mask. I will not fail.——I know what she means by toying away an hour well enough.—Pox, I have lost all my appetite to her; yet she's a fine woman, and I loved her once. But I don't know, since I have been in a great measure kept by her, the case is altered; what was my pleasure is become my duty: and I have as little stomach to her now as if I were her husband.——Should she smoke my design upon Cynthia, I were in a fine pickle. She has a damned penetrating head, and knows how to interpret a coldness the right way; therefore I must dissemble ardour and ecstacy, that's resolved: How easily and pleasantly is that dissembled before fruition! Pox on it, that a man cann't drink without quenching his thirst. Ha! yonder comes Mellefont thoughtful. Let me think:—Meet her at eight—hum—ha!—by heaven I have it—If I can speak to my lord before——Was it my brain or providence? no matter which—I will deceive them all, and yet secure myself: 'twas a lucky thought! Well, this double-dealing is a jewel.—Here he comes; now for me——

[MASKWELL, *pretending not to see him, walks by him, and speaks, as it were, to himself.*

Enter MELLEFONT, *musing.*

Mask. Mercy on us! what will the wickedness of this world come to!

Mel. How now, Jack? What, so full of contemplation that you run over!

Mask. I'm glad you are come, for I could not contain myself any longer, and was just going to give vent to a secret, which nobody but you ought to drink down.——Your aunt is just gone from hence.

Mel. And having trusted thee with the secrets of her soul, thou art villainously bent to discover them all to me, ha?

Mask. I am afraid my frailty leans that way—

But I don't know whether I can in honour discover them all.

Mel. All, all, man. What, you may in honour betray her as far as she betrays herself. No tragical design upon my person, I hope?

Mask. No, but it is a comical design upon mine.

Mel. What dost thou mean?

Mask. Listen and be dumb.—We have been bargaining about the rate of your ruin——

Mel. Like any two guardians to an orphan heiress——Well!

Mask. And whereas pleasure is generally paid with mischief, what mischief I do is to be paid with pleasure.

Mel. So, when you've swallowed the potion, you sweeten your mouth with a plumb.

Mask. You are merry, sir, but I shall probe your constitution. In short, the price of your banishment is to be paid with the person of——

Mel. Of Cynthia, and her fortune—Why you forget you told me this before.

Mask. No, no, so far you are right; and I am, as an earnest of that bargain, to have full and free possession of the person of—your aunt.

Mel. Ha!——Pho! you trifle.

Mask. By this light, I am serious; all raillery apart—I knew 'twould stun you:——This evening at eight she will receive me in her bed-chamber.

Mel. Hell and the devil! is she abandoned of all grace—Why, the woman is possessed.——

Mask. Well, will you go in my stead?

Mel. By heaven, into a hot furnace sooner.

Mask. No, you would not—it would not be so convenient as I can order matters.

Mel. What do you mean?

Mask. Mean! not to disappoint the lady, I assure you——Ha, ha, ha! how gravely he looks ——Come, come, I won't perplex you. 'Tis the only thing that Providence could have contrived to make me capable of serving you, either to my inclination or your own necessity.

Mel. How, how, for heaven's sake, dear Maskwell?

Mask. Why thus—I'll go according to appointment; you shall have notice at the critical minute to come and surprise your aunt and me together; counterfeit a rage against me, and I will make my escape through the private passage from her chamber, which I'll take care to leave open; 'twill be hard, if then you cann't bring her to any conditions. For this discovery will disarm her of all defence, and leave her entirely at your mercy; nay, she must ever after be in awe of you.

Mel. Let me adore thee, my better genius! By heaven I think it is not in the power of Fate to disappoint my hopes——My hopes, my certainty!

Mask. Well, I'll meet you here within a quarter of eight, and give you notice. [*Exit.*

Mel. Good fortune ever go along with thee.

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Mellefont, get out of the way; my Lady Plyant's coming, and I shall never succeed while thou art in sight——Though she begins to tack about; but I made love a great while to no purpose.

Mel. Why, what's the matter? She is convinced that I don't care for her.

Care. I cannot get an answer from her that does not begin with her honour, or her virtue, her religion, or some such cant. Then she has told me the whole story of St Paul's nine years courtship; how he has lain for whole nights together upon the stairs before her chamber-door; and that the first favour he received from her was a piece of an old scarlet petticoat for a stomacher; which, since the day of his marriage, he has, out of a piece of gallantry, converted into a night-cap, and wears it still with much solemnity on his anniversary wedding-night.

Mel. That I have seen, with the ceremony thereunto belonging—For on that night he creeps in at the bed's feet, like a gulled Bassa that has married a relation of the Grand Signior, and that night he has his arms at liberty. Did she not tell you at what a distance she keeps him? He has confessed to me, that but at some certain times, that is, I suppose, when she apprehends being with child, he never has the privilege of using the familiarity of a husband with a wife. He was once given to scrambling with his hands, and sprawling in his sleep, and ever since she has swaddled him up in blankets, and his hands and feet swathed down, and so put to bed; and there he lies with a great beard, like a Russian bear upon a drift of snow. You are very great with him—I wonder he never told you his grievances; he will, I warrant you.

Care. Excessively foolish!——But that which gives me most hopes of her, is her telling me of the many temptations she has resisted.

Mel. Nay, then you have her; for a woman's bragging to a man that she has overcome temptations, is an argument that they were weakly offered, and a challenge to him to engage her more irresistibly. 'Tis only enhancing the price of the commodity, by telling you how many customers have underbid her.

Care. Nay, I don't despair—But still she has a grudging to you—I talked to her t'other night at my Lord Froth's masquerade, when I am satisfied she knew me, and I had no reason to complain of my reception; but I find women are not the same bare-faced and in masks——and a vizor disguises their inclinations as much as their faces.

Mel. 'Tis a mistake; for women may most properly be said to be unmasked when they wear vizors; for that secures them from blushing, and being out of countenance; and, next to being in the dark, or alone, they are most truly themselves in a vizor-mask. Here they come. I'll leave you. Ply her close, and by and by clap a *billet-doux* into her hand: for a woman never thinks a man truly in love with her till he has been fool enough to think of her out of her sight, and to lose so much time as to write to her. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir PAUL *and Lady* PLYANT.

Sir P. Sha'n't we disturb your meditation, Mr Careless? You would be in private?

Care. You bring that along with you, Sir Paul, that shall be always welcome to my privacy.

Sir P. O, sweet sir, you load your humble servants, both me and my wife, with continual favours.

Lady P. Sir Paul, what a phrase was there! You will be making answers, and taking that upon you which ought to lie upon me: that you should have so little breeding to think Mr Careless did not apply himself to me! Pray, what have you to entertain any body's privacy? I swear and declare, in the face of the world, I'm ready to blush for your ignorance.

Sir P. I acquiesce, my lady; but don't snub so loud. [*Aside to her.*

Lady P. Mr Careless, if a person that is wholly illiterate might be supposed to be capable of being qualified to make a suitable return to those obligations which you are pleased to confer upon one that is wholly incapable of being qualified in all those circumstances, I am sure I should rather attempt it than any thing in the world, [*Curtsies.*] for I'm sure there's nothing in the world that I would rather. [*Curtsies.*] But I know Mr Careless is so great a critic, and so fine a gentleman, that it is impossible for me———

Care. O heavens! Madam, you confound me.

Sir P. Gads-bud! she's a fine person———

Lady P. O Lord, sir, pardon me! we women have not those advantages: I know my own imperfections—but at the same time you must give me leave to declare, in the face of the world, that nobody is more sensible of favours and things; for, with the reserve of my honour, I assure you, Mr Careless, I don't know any thing in the world I would refuse to a person so meritorious——— You'll pardon my want of expression.

Care. O, your ladyship is abounding in all excellence, particularly that of phrase.

Lady P. You are so obliging, sir.

Care. Your ladyship is so charming.

Sir P. So, now, now; now, my lady.

Lady P. So well bred.

Care. So surprising.

Lady P. So well drest, so *bonne mien*, so eloquent, so unaffected, so easy, so free, so particular, so agreeable———

Sir P. Ay, so, so, there.

Care. O lord, I beseech you, madam, don't—

Lady P. So gay, so graceful, so good teeth, so fine shape, so fine limbs, so fine linen, and I don't doubt but you have a very good skin, sir.

Care. For heaven's sake, madam—I am quite out of countenance.

Sir P. And my lady's quite out of breath; or else you should hear—Gads-bud, you may talk of my Lady Froth———

Care. O fy, fy! not to be named of a day—My Lady Froth is very well in her accomplishments—but it is when my Lady Plyant is not thought of——if that can ever be.

Lady P. O, you overcome me——That is so excessive.

Sir P. Nay, I swear and vow that was pretty.

Care. O, Sir Paul, you are the happiest man alive. Such a lady! that is the envy of her own sex, and the admiration of ours.

Sir P. Your humble servant! I am, I thank Heaven, in a fine way of living, as I may say, peacefully and happily, and I think need not envy any of my neighbours, blessed be Providence! ——Ay, truly, Mr Careless, my lady is a great blessing, a fine, discreet, well-spoken woman as you shall see—if it becomes me to say so; and we live very comfortably together; she is a little hasty sometimes, and so am I; but mine's soon over, and then I am sorry—O, Mr Careless, if so it were not for one thing———.

Enter Boy with a Letter.

Lady P. How often have you been told of that, you jackanapes?

Sir P. Gad so, gad's-bud———Tim, carry it to my lady; you should have carried it to my lady first.

Boy. 'Tis directed to your worship.

Sir P. Well, well, my lady reads all letters first——Child, do so no more: D'ye hear, Tim?

Boy. No, and please you. [*Exit.*

Sir P. A humour of my wife's; you know women have little fancies——But, as I was telling you, Mr Careless, if it were not for one thing, I should think myself the happiest man in the world; indeed that touches me near, very near.

Care. What can that be, Sir Paul?

Sir P. Why, I have, I thank Heaven, a very plentiful fortune, a good estate in the country, some houses in town, and some money, a pretty tolerable personal estate; and it is a great grief to me, indeed it is, Mr Careless, that I have not a son to inherit this. 'Tis true, I have a daughter, and a fine dutiful child she is, though I say it, blessed be Providence I may say; for indeed, Mr Careless, I am mightily beholden to Providence—A poor unworthy sinner—But if I had a son, ah! that's my affliction, and my only affliction; indeed, I cannot refrain tears when it comes into my mind. [*Cries.*

Care. Why, methinks that might be easily remedied; my lady is a fine likely woman.

Sir P. Oh, a fine likely woman as you shall see in a summer's day—Indeed she is, Mr Careless, in all respects.

Care. And I should not have taken you to have been so old———.

Sir P. Alas! that's not it, Mr Careless: ah! that's not it; no, no, you shoot wide of the mark a mile; indeed you do: that's not it, Mr Careless; no, no, that's not it.

Care. No! what can be the matter then?

Sir P. You'll scarcely believe me when I shall tell you—my lady is so nice!—It is very strange,

but it is true: too true—she is so very nice, that I don't believe she would touch a man for the world——at least not above once a year; I am sure I have found it so; and, alas! what's once a-year to an old man, who would do good in his generation! Indeed, it is true, Mr Careless, it breaks my heart—I am her husband, as I may say; though far unworthy of that honour, yet I am her husband; but, alas-a-day! I have no more familiarity with her person—as to that matter—than with my own mother—no, indeed.

Care. Alas-a-day! this is a lamentable story; my lady must be told on't; she must, i'faith, Sir Paul; 'tis an injury to the world.

Sir P. Ah! would to Heaven you would, Mr Careless; you are mightily in her favour.

Care. I warrant you; what, we must have a son some way or other.

Sir P. Indeed, I should be mightily bound to you if you could bring it about, Mr Careless.

Lady P. Here, Sir Paul, it is from your steward; here's a return of 600l.; you may take fifty of it for the next half year. [*Gives him the letter.*

Enter Lord FROTH *and* CYNTHIA.

Sir P. How does my girl? Come hither to thy father—poor lamb, thou art melancholic.

Ld F. Heaven, Sir Paul! you amaze me of all things in the world—You are never pleased but when we are all upon the broad grin; all laugh and no company; ah! then 'tis such a sight to see some teeth——Sure you are a great admirer of my Lady Whifler, Mr Sneer, and Sir Laurence Loud, and that gang.

Sir P. I vow and swear she is a very merry woman, but I think she laughs a little too much.

Ld F. Merry! O Lord, what a character that is of a woman of quality——You have been at my Lady Whifler's upon her day, madam?

Cyn. Yes, my lord—I must humour this fool. [*Aside.*

Ld F. Well and how? hee! What is your sense of the conversation?

Cyn. O, most ridiculous! a perpetual concert of laughing without any harmony; for sure, my lord, to laugh out of time, is as disagreeable as to sing out of time or out of tune.

Ld F. Hee, hee, hee, right; and then my Lady Whifler is so ready—she always comes in three bars too soon—And then, what do they laugh at? For you know laughing without a jest is as impertinent, hee! as——

Cyn. As dancing without a fiddle.

Ld F. Just, i'faith,—that was at my tongue's end.

Cyn. But that cannot be properly said of them, for I think they are all in good nature with the world, and only laugh at one another; and you must allow they have all jests in their persons, though they have none in their conversation.

Ld F. True, as I am a person of honour—— For Heaven's sake let us sacrifice them to mirth a little. [*Enter Boy, and whispers Sir* PAUL.

Sir P. Gad so—Wife, wife, my Lady Plyant, I have a word.

Lady P. I am busy, Sir Paul, I wonder at your impertinence——

Care. Sir Paul, hark ye, I am reasoning the matter you know:——Madam, if your ladyship please we'll discourse of this in the next room.

[*Exit Lady P. and* CARE.

Sir P. O ho, I wish you good success, I wish you good success. Boy, tell my lady, when she has done, I would speak with her below.

[*Exit Sir P.*

Enter Lady FROTH *and* BRISK.

Lady P. Then you think that episode between Susan the dairy-maid, and our coachman, is not amiss; you know I may suppose the dairy in town as well as in the country.

Brisk. Incomparable, let me perish—But then being an heroic poem, had you not better call him a charioteer? Charioteer sounds great: besides your ladyship's coachman having a red face, and you comparing him to the sun—And you know the sun is called Heaven's Charioteer.

Lady F. Oh, infinitely better! I am extremely beholden to you for the hint; stay, we'll read over those half a score lines again. [*Pulls out a paper.*] Let me see here, you know what goes before——the comparison, you know. [*Reads.*

For as the sun shines every day,
So of our coachman I may say——

Brisk. I am afraid that simile won't do in wet weather—because you say the sun shines every day.

Lady F. No, for the sun it won't, but it will do for the coachman, for you know there's most occasion for a coach in wet weather.

Brisk. Right, right; that saves all.

Lady F. Then I don't say the sun shines all the day, but that he peeps now and then; yet he does shine all the day too, you know, though we don't see him.

Brisk. Right, but the vulgar will never comprehend that.

Lady F. Well, you shall hear—Let me see, [*Reads.*

For as the sun shines every day,
So of our coachman I may say;
He shews his drunken fiery face,
Just as the sun does, more or less.

Brisk. That's right; all's well, all's well. More or less.

Lady F. [*Reads.*]

And when at night his labour's done,
Then too, like Heaven's charioteer, the sun: Ay, charioteer does better.
Into the dairy he descends,
And there his whipping and his driving ends;
There he's secure from danger of a bilk,
His fare is paid him, and he sets in milk.

For Susan, you know, is Thetis, and so——

Brisk. Incomparable well and proper, 'egad—But I have one exception to make—Don't you think bilk, (I know it is good rhyme) but don't you think bilk and fare too like a hackney-coachman?

Lady F. I swear and vow I am afraid so——

And yet our Jehu was a hackney-coachman when my lord took him.

Brisk. Was he? I am answered, if Jehu was a hackney-coachman—you may put that in the marginal notes, though, to prevent criticism, only mark it with a small asterism, and say—Jehu was formerly a hackney-coachman.

Lady F. I will; you'll oblige me extremely to write notes to the whole poem.

Brisk. With all my heart and soul, and proud of the vast honour, let me perish.

Ld F. Hee, hee, my dear, have you done?—Won't you join with us? we were laughing at my lady Whifler and Mr Sneer.

Lady F. ——Ay, my dear——Were you? Oh filthy Mr Sneer; he's a nauseous figure, a most fulsamic fop, foh ——He spent two days together in going about Covent-Garden to suit the lining of his coach with his complexion.

Ld F. O, silly! yet his aunt is as fond of him as if she had brought the ape into the world herself.

Brisk. Who, my Lady Toothless?—O, she's a mortifying spectacle; she's always chewing the cud like an old ewe.

Cyn. Fye, Mr Brisk! eringo is for her cough.

Lady F. I have seen her take them half-chewed out of her mouth to laugh, and then put them in again.—Foh!

Ld F. Foh!

Lady F. Then she is always ready to laugh when Sneer offers to speak—and sits in expectation of his no jest, with her gums bare, and her mouth open——

Brisk. Like an oyster at low ebb, 'egad—Ha, ha, ha!

Cyn. [*Aside.*] Well, I find there are no fools so inconsiderable in themselves, but they can render other people contemptible by exposing their infirmities.

Lady F. Then that t'other great strapping lady—I cannot hit of her name; the old fat fool that paints so exorbitantly.

Brisk. I know whom you mean—But, deuce take me, I cannot hit of her name neither——Paints, d'ye say? Why, she lays it on with a trowel—Then she has a great beard that bristles through it, and makes her look as if she were plaistered with lime and hair, let me perish.

Lady F. Oh, you made a song upon her, Mr Brisk.

Brisk. He! 'gad, so I did—My lord can sing it.

Cyn. O good, my lord, let us hear it.

Brisk. 'Tis not a song neither—It is a sort of an epigram, or rather an epigrammic sonnet; I don't know what to call it, but it is satire.—Sing it, my lord.

Lord FROTH *sings.*

Ancient Phillis has young graces,
'Tis a strange thing, but a true one;
Shall I tell you how?
She, herself, makes her own faces,
And each morning wears a new one;
Where's the wonder now?

Brisk. Short, but there is salt in it; my way of writing, 'egad.

Enter Footman.

Lady F. How now?

Foot. Your ladyship's chair is come.

Lady F. Is nurse and the child in it?

Foot. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*

Lady F. O, the dear creature! let us go see it.

Ld F. I swear, my dear, you'll spoil that child with sending it to and again so often; this is the seventh time the chair has gone for her to-day.

Lady F. O, la! I swear it's but the sixth—and I han't seen her these two hours—The poor dear creature—I swear, my lord, you don't love poor little Sappho——Come, my dear Cynthia, Mr Brisk, we'll go see Sappho, though my lord won't.

Cyn. I'll wait upon your ladyship.

Brisk. Pray, madam, how old is Lady Sappho?

Lady F. Three quarters, but I swear she has a world of wit, and can sing a tune already. My lord, won't you go? Won't you? What, not to see Saph? Pray, my lord, come see little Saph. I knew you could not stay.

[*Exeunt all but* CYN.

Cyn. 'Tis not so hard to counterfeit joy in the depth of affliction, as to dissemble mirth in the company of fools—Why should I call them fools? The world thinks better of them; for those who have quality and education, wit, and fine conversation, are received and admired by the world—If not, they like and admire themselves——And why is not that true wisdom, for it is happiness? And, for aught I know, we have misapplied the name all this while, and mistaken the thing: since,

If happiness in self-content is placed,
The wise are wretched, and fools only bless'd.

[*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter MELLEFONT *and* CYNTHIA.

Cyn. I heard him loud as I came by the closet-door, and my lady with him; but she seemed to moderate his passion.

Mel. Ay, hell thank her! as gentle breezes moderate a fire; but I shall counter-work her spells, and ride the witch in her own bridle.

Cyn. It is impossible; she'll cast beyond you still—I'll lay my life it will never be a match.

Mel. What?

Cyn. Between you and me.

Mel. Why so?

Cyn. My mind gives me it won't——because we are both willing; we each of us strive to reach the goal and hinder one another in the race; I swear it never does well when parties are so agreed—For when people walk hand in hand, there's neither overtaking nor meeting; we hunt in couples where we both pursue the same game, but forget one another; and 'tis because we are so near that we don't think of coming together.

Mel. Hum! 'egad I believe there's something in it—Marriage is the game that we hunt; and while we think that we only have it in view, I don't see but we have it in our power.

Cyn. Within reach; for example, give me your hand: you have looked through the wrong end of the perspective all this while: for nothing has been between us but our fears.

Mel. I don't know why we should not steal out of the house this very moment, and marry one another without consideration, or the fear of repentance. Pox o'fortune, portion, settlements, and jointures!

Cyn. Ay, ay, what have we to do with them? you know we marry for love.

Mel. Love, love, downright very villainous love.

Cyn. And he that cannot live upon love deserves to die in a ditch.—Here then, I give you my promise, in spite of duty, any temptation of wealth, your inconstancy, or my own inclination to change——

Mel. To run most wilfully and unreasonably away with me this moment, and be married.

Cyn. Hold—Never to marry any body else.

Mel. That's but a kind of negative consent—Why, you won't baulk the frolic?

Cyn. If you had not been so assured of your own conduct I would not—But 'tis but reasonable that, since I consent to like a man, without the vile consideration of money, he should give me a very evident demonstration of his wit; therefore, let me see you undermine my Lady Touchwood, as you boasted, and force her to give her consent, and then——

Mel. I'll do it.

Cyn. And I'll do it.

Mel. This very next ensuing hour of eight o'clock is the last minute of her reign, unless the devil assist her in *propria persona*.

Cyn. Well, if the devil should assist her, and your plot miscarry——

Mel. Ay, what am I to trust to then?

Cyn. Why, if you give me very clear demonstration that it was the devil, I will allow for irresistible odds. But if I find it to be only chance, or destiny, or unlucky stars, or any thing but the very devil, I am inexorable: only still I'll keep my word, and live a maid for your sake.

Mel. And you won't die one for your own; so still there's hope.

Cyn. Here is my mother-in-law, and your friend Careless, I would not have them see us together yet. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CARELESS *and Lady* PLYANT.

Lady P. I swear, Mr Careless, you are very alluring—and say so many fine things, and nothing is so moving to me as a fine thing. Well, I must do you this justice, and declare, in the face of the world, never any body gained so far upon me as yourself; with blushes I must own it, you have shaken, as I may say, the very foundation of my honour—Well, sure if I escape your importunities, I shall value myself as long as I live, I swear.

Care. And despise me. [*Sighing.*

Lady P. The last of any man in the world, by my purity; now you make me swear—O, gratitude forbid that I should ever be wanting in a respectful acknowledgment of an entire resignation of all my best wishes for the person and parts of so accomplished a person, whose merit challenges much more, I am sure, than my illiterate praises can description——

Care. [*In a whining tone.*] Ah, Heavens, madam, you ruin me with kindness;—

Your charming tongue pursues the victory of your eyes,
While at your feet your poor adorer dies.

Lady P. Ah! very fine.

Care. [*Still whining.*] Ah, why are you so fair, so bewitching fair? O, let me grow to the ground here, and feast upon that hand; O, let me press it to my heart, my trembling heart; the nimble movement shall instruct your pulse, and teach it to alarm desire.—Zoons, I am almost at the end of my cant, if she does not yield quickly. [*Aside.*

Lady P. O, that's so passionate and fine, I cannot hear it——I am not safe if I stay, and must leave you.

Care. And must you leave me? Rather let me languish out a wretched life, and breathe my soul beneath your feet.——I must say the same thing over again, and cannot help it. [*Aside.*

Lady P. I swear I am ready to languish too—O, my honour! Whither is it going? I protest you have given me the palpitation of the heart.

Care. Can you be so cruel?

Lady P. O rise, I beseech you; say no more till you rise—Why did you kneel so long? I swear I was so transported I did not see it.—Well, to shew you how far you have gain'd upon me, I assure you, if Sir Paul should die, of all mankind there's none I'd sooner make my second choice.

Care. O Heaven! I cannot outlive this night without your favour——I feel my spirits faint, a general dampness overspreads my face, a cold deadly dew already vents through all my pores, and will to-morrow wash me for ever from your sight, and drown me in my tomb.

Lady P. O, you have conquer'd, sweet, melting, moving sir, you have conquered—What heart of marble can refrain to weep, and yield to such sad sayings. [*Cries.*

Care. I thank Heaven, they are the saddest that I ever said.—O, I shall never contain laughter. [*Aside.*

Lady P. Oh, I yield myself all up to your uncontroulable embraces——Say, thou dear, dying man, when, where, and how?——Ah, there's Sir Paul.

Care. 'Slife! yonder's Sir Paul; but if he were not come, I am so transported I cannot speak—This note will inform you.

[*Gives her a note, and exit.*

Enter Sir PAUL *and* CYNTHIA.

Sir P. Thou art my tender lambkin, and shalt do what thou wilt—But endeavour to forget this Mellefont.

Cyn. I would obey you to my power, sir; but if I have not him, I have sworn never to marry.

Sir P. Never to marry! Heavens forbid!——Must I neither have sons nor grandsons? Must the family of the Plyants be utterly extinct for want of issue male? O, impiety!—But did you swear? Did that sweet creature swear! ha?—How durst you swear without my consent, ah? Gads-bud, who am I?

Cyn. Pray don't be angry, sir; when I swore, I had your consent, and therefore I swore.

Sir P. Why, then the revoking my consent does annul, or make of none effect, your oath; so you may unswear it again—the law will allow it.

Cyn. Aye, but my conscience never will.

Sir P. Gads-bud, no matter for that; conscience and law never go together; you must not expect that.

Lady P. Ay, but, Sir Paul, I conceive, if she has sworn, d'ye mark me; if she has once sworn, it is most unchristian, inhuman, and obscene, that she should break it. I'll make up the match again, because Mr Careless said it would oblige him. [*Aside.*

Sir P. Does your ladyship conceive so?——Why, I was of that opinion once too—Nay, if your ladyship conceives so, I am of that opinion again; but I can neither find my lord nor my lady, to know what they intend.

Lady P. I am satisfied that my cousin Mellefont has been much wronged.

Cyn. [*Aside.*] I am amazed to find her of our side, for I am sure she loved him.

Lady P. I know my Lady Touchwood has no kindness for him; and, besides, I have been informed by Mr Careless, that Mellefont had never any thing more than a profound respect.—That he has owned himself to be my admirer, 'tis true; but he was never so presumptuous to entertain any dishonourable notion of things; so that, if this be made plain, I don't see how my daughter can in conscience, or honour, or any thing in the world——

Sir P. Indeed, if this be made plain, as my lady your mother says, child——

Lady P. Plain! I was inform'd of it by Mr Careless; and, I assure you, Mr Careless is a person that has a most extraordinary respect and honour for you, Sir Paul.

Cyn. [*Aside.*] And for your ladyship too, I believe, or else you had not changed sides so soon; now I begin to find it.

Sir P. I am much obliged to Mr Careless really; he is a person that I have a great value for, not only for that, but because he has a great veneration for your ladyship.

Lady P. O la! no indeed, Sir Paul, it is upon your account.

Sir P. No; I protest and vow I have no title to his esteem, but in having the honour to appertain in some measure to your ladyship, that's all.

Lady P. O la! now I swear and declare it sha'n't be so; you are too modest, Sir Paul.

Sir P. It becomes me, when there is any comparison made between——

Lady P. O fy, fy, Sir Paul! you'll put me out of countenance—Your very obedient and affectionate wife, that's all—and highly honour'd in that title.

Sir P. Gads-bud, I am transported! Give me leave to kiss your ladyship's hand.

Cyn. That my poor father should be so very silly! [*Aside.*

Lady P. My lip, indeed, Sir Paul, I swear you shall. [*He kisses her, and bows very low.*

Sir P. I humbly thank your ladyship—I don't know whether I fly on ground, or walk in air—Gads-bud, she was never thus before——Well, I must own myself beholden to Mr Careless—As sure as can be, this is all his doing—something that he has said—Well, 'tis a rare thing to have an ingenious friend.—Well, your ladyship is of opinion that the match may go forward.

Lady P. By all means. Mr Careless has satisfied me of the matter.

Sir P. Well, why then, lamb, you may keep your oath; but have a care of making rash vows.—Come hither to me, and kiss papa.

Lady P. I swear and declare, I am in such a twitter to read Mr Careless's letter, that I cannot forbear any longer—But though I may read all letters first by prerogative, yet I'll be sure to be unsuspected this time.——Sir Paul!

Sir P. Did your ladyship call?

Lady P. Nay, not to interrupt you, my dear—Only lend me your letter which you had from your steward to-day; I would look upon the account again, and may be increase the allowance.

Sir P. There it is, madam.—Do you want a pen and ink? [*Bows, and gives the letter.*

Lady P. No, no, nothing else, I thank you, Sir Paul—So now I can read my own letter under the cover of his. [*Aside.*

Sir P. Heh! and wilt thou bring a grandson at nine months end, heh?—a brave chopping boy.—I'll settle a thousand pounds a-year upon the rogue, as soon as ever he looks me in the face, I will, gads-bud!—I am overjoy'd to think I have any of my family that will bring children into the world; for I would fain have some resemblance of myself in my posterity—heh, Thy! Cannot you contrive that affair, girl? Do; gads-bud, think on thy old father, heh! Make the young rogue as like as you can.

Cyn. I am glad to see you so merry, sir.

Sir P. Merry! Gads-bud, I am serious; I'll give thee five hundred pound for every inch of him that resembles me—Ah, this eye, this left eye! A thousand pounds for this left eye. This has done execution in its time, girl—Why, thou hast my leer, hussy, just thy father's leer—Let it be transmitted to the young rogue by the help of imagination.—Why, 'tis the mark of our family, Thy; our house is distinguished by a languishing eye, as the house of Austria is by a thick lip.—Ah! when I was of your age, hussy, I would have held fifty to one I could have drawn my own picture—Gads-bud, but I could have done—not so much as you neither——but——nay, don't blush——

Cyn. I don't blush, sir, for I vow I don't understand.

Sir P. Pshaw, pshaw! you fib, you baggage, you do understand, and you shall understand—Come, don't be so nice; Gads-bud, don't learn after your mother-in-law, my lady here——Marry, Heaven forbid that you should follow her example; that would spoil all indeed.—Bless us, if you should take a vagary, and make a rash resolution on your wedding-night to die a maid, as she did, all were ruined, all my hopes lost—My heart would break, and my estate would be left to the wide world, heh!—I hope you are a better Christian than to think of living a nun, heh? Answer me.

Cyn. I am all obedience, sir, to your commands.

Lady P. [*Having read the letter.*] O dear Mr Careless! I swear he writes charmingly, and he looks charmingly, and he has charm'd me as much as I have charm'd him; and so I'll tell him in the wardrobe when 'tis dark.—O Crimini! I hope Sir Paul has not seen both letters.——[*Puts the wrong letter hastily up, and gives him her own.*] Sir Paul, here's your letter; to-morrow morning I'll settle accounts to your advantage.

Enter BRISK.

Brisk. Sir Paul, Gads-bud, you are an uncivil person, let me tell you, and all that; and I did not think it had been in you.

Sir P. O la! what's the matter now? I hope you are not angry, Mr Brisk?

Brisk. Deuce take me! I believe you intend to marry your daughter yourself; you are always brooding over her like an old hen, as if she were not well hatch'd, egad, heh?

Sir P. Good! strange! Mr Brisk is such a merry, facetious person, he, he, he!—No, no, I have done with her, I have done with her now.

Brisk. The fiddles have staid this hour in the hall, and my Lord Froth wants a partner: we can never begin without her.

Sir P. Go, go, child, go, get you gone, and dance and be merry; I will come and look at you by and by.—Where is my son Mellefont?

Lady P. I'll send him to them; I know where he is.

Brisk. Sir Paul, will you send Careless into the hall if you meet him?

Sir P. I will, I will; I'll go and look for him on purpose. [*Exeunt all but* BRISK.

Brisk. So now they are all gone, and I have an opportunity to practise——Ah, my dear Lady Froth! She's a most engaging creature, if she were not so fond of that damn'd coxcombly lord of hers; and yet I am forced to allow him wit too, to keep in with him——No matter, she's a woman of parts, and, egad, parts will carry her.—She said she would follow me into the gallery.——Now to make my approaches—Hem, hem! Ah, madam!—[*Bows.*]—Pox on't! why should I disparage my parts by thinking what to say? None but dull rogues think; witty men, like rich fellows, are always ready for all expences; while your blockheads, like poor needy scoundrels, are forced to examine their stock, and forecast the charges of the day.—Here she comes; I'll seem not to see her, and try to win her with a new airy invention of my own—hem!

Enter Lady FROTH.

Brisk. [*Sings walking about.*] I'm sick with love, ha, ha, pr'ythee come cure me.

I'm sick with, &c.

O, ye powers! O, my Lady Froth, my Lady Froth! my Lady Froth! Heigho! Break, heart; Gods, I thank you.

[*Stands musing with his arms across.*

Lady F. O heavens, Mr Brisk! What's the matter?

Brisk. My Lady Froth! Your ladyship's most humble servant——The matter, madam! nothing at all madam, nothing, 'egad. I was fallen into the most agreeable amusement in the whole province of contemplation: That is all—(I'll seem to conceal my passion, and that will look like respect.) [*Aside.*

Lady F. Bless me, why did you call out upon me so loud?——

Brisk. O lord, I, madam! I beseech your ladyship——When?

Lady F. Just now, as I came in; bless me, why, don't you know it?

Brisk. Not I, let me perish———But did I? Strange! I confess your ladyship was in my thoughts; and I was in a sort of dream that did in a manner represent a very pleasing object to my imagination, but—but did I indeed?——To see how love and murder will out. But did I really name my Lady Froth?

Lady F. Three times aloud, as I love letters—But did you talk of love? O, Parnassus! Who would have thought Mr Brisk could have been in love, ha, ha, ha! O, heavens! I thought you could have no mistress but the nine muses.

Brisk. No more I have, 'egad, for I adore them all in your ladyship——Let me perish, I don't know whether to be splenetic or airy upon it; the deuce take me if I can tell whether I am glad or sorry that your ladyship has made the discovery.

Lady F. O, be merry by all means——Prince Volscius in love! Ha, ha, ha!

Brisk. O, barbarous, to turn me into ridicule! Yet, ha, ha, ha! the deuce take me, I cannot help

laughing myself, ha, ha, ha; yet by heavens I have a violent passion for your ladyship seriously.

Lady F. Seriously! ha, ha, ha.

Brisk. Seriously, ha, ha, ha. Gad I have, for all I laugh.

Lady F. Ha, ha, ha! What d'ye think I laugh at? Ha, ha, ha.

Brisk. Me, 'egad, ha, ha!

Lady F. No, the deuce take me if I don't laugh at myself; for hang me if I have not a violent passion for Mr Brisk, ha, ha, ha.

Brisk. Seriously?

Lady F. Seriously, ha, ha, ha.

Brisk. That's well enough, let me perish, ha, ha, ha. O miraculous! what a happy discovery! Ah, my dear charming Lady Froth!

Lady F. Oh, my adored Mr Brisk! [*Embrace.*

Enter Lord FROTH.

Lord F. The company are all ready——How now!

Brisk. Zoons, madam, there's my lord! [*Softly to her.*

Lady F. Take no notice——but observe me—Now cast off, and meet me at the lower end of the room, and then join hands again; I could teach my lord this dance purely, but I vow, Mr Brisk, I cann't tell how to come so near any other man. Oh, here's my lord; now you shall see me do it with him.

[*They pretend to practise part of a country dance.*

Ld F. ——Oh, I see there's no harm yet——But I don't like this familiarity. [*Aside.*

Lady F. —Shall you and I do our close dance to shew Mr Brisk?

Ld F. No, my dear, do it with him.

Lady F. I'll do it with him, my lord, when you are out of the way.

Brisk. That's good, 'egad, that's good; deuce take me, I can hardly hold laughing in his face. [*Aside.*

Ld F. Any other time, my dear, or we'll dance it below.

Lady F. With all my heart.

Brisk. Come, my lord, I'll wait on you—My charming witty angel! [*To her.*

Lady F. We shall have whispering time enough you know, since we are partners. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lady PLYANT *and* CARELESS.

Lady P. O, Mr Careless, Mr Careless, I'm ruined, I'm undone!

Care. What's the matter, madam?

Lady P. O the unluckiest accident! I'm afraid I sha'n't live to tell it you.

Care. Heaven forbid! What is it?

Lady P. I'm in such a fright; the strangest quandary and premunire! I'm all over in an universal agitation; I dare swear every circumstance of me trembles.—O, your letter, your letter! By an unfortunate mistake, I have given Sir Paul your letter instead of his own.

Care. That was unlucky.

Lady P. O, yonder he comes reading of it; for heaven's sake step in here and advise me quickly, before he sees. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir PAUL *with the letter.*

Sir P. ——O, Providence, what a conspiracy have I discovered!——But let me see to make an end on't.——[*Reads.*] Hum—"After supper in the wardrobe by the gallery. If Sir Paul should surprise us, I have a commission from him to treat with you about the very matter of fact"—Matter of fact! Very pretty; it seems, then, I am conducing to my own cuckoldom; why this is a very traitorous position of taking up arms by my authority against my person! Well, let me see—"'Till then I languish in expectation of my adored charmer. *Dying* NED CARELESS." Gads-bud, would that were matter of fact too!—Die and be damned, for a Judas Maccabeus and Iscariot both! O friendship, what art thou but a name! Henceforward let no man make a friend that would not be a cuckold: for whomsoever he receives into his bosom, will find the way to his bed, and there return his caresses with interest to his wife. Have I for this been pinioned night after night for three years past? Have I been swathed in blankets till I have been even deprived of motion? Have I approached the marriage-bed with reverence as to a sacred shrine, and denied myself the enjoyment of lawful domestic pleasures to preserve its purity, and must I now find it polluted by foreign iniquity? O, my Lady Plyant, you were chaste as ice, but you are melted now, and false as water!——But Providence has been constant to me in discovering this conspiracy; still I am beholden to Providence; if it were not for Providence, sure, poor Sir Paul, thy heart would break.

Enter Lady PLYANT.

Lady P. So, sir, I see you have read the letter ——Well, now, Sir Paul, what do you think of your friend Careless? Has he been treacherous, or did you give his insolence a licence to make trial of your wife's suspected virtue? D'ye see here? [*Snatches the letter as in anger.*] Look, read it! Gad's my life, if I thought it were so, I would this moment renounce all communication with you. Ungrateful monster! Eh? Is it so? Ay, I see it, a plot upon my honour; your guilty cheeks confess it: Oh, where shall wronged virtue fly for reparation! I'll be divorced this instant.

Sir P. Gads-bud, what shall I say? This is the strangest surprise! Why, I don't know any thing at all, nor I don't know whether there be any thing at all in the world or no.

Lady P. I thought I should try you, false man. I that never dissembled in my life, yet, to make trial of you, pretended to like that monster of iniquity, Careless, and found out that contrivance to let you see this letter; which now I find was of your own inditing—I do, Heathen, I do; see my face no more; I'll be divorced presently.

Sir P. O strange! what will become of me!—I

am so amazed and so overjoyed, so afraid and so sorry.—But did you give me this letter on purpose, eh, did you?

Lady P. Did I! Do you doubt me, Turk, Saracen! I have a cousin that's a proctor in the Commons, I'll go to him instantly———

Sir P. Hold, stay, I beseech your ladyship—I am so overjoyed—stay, I'll confess all.

Lady P. What will you confess, Jew?

Sir P. Why now, as I hope to be saved, I had no hand in this letter—Nay, hear me, I beseech your ladyship: The devil take me now if he did not go beyond my commission—If I desired him to do any more than speak a good word only just for me; Gads-bud, only for poor Sir Paul, I am an anabaptist, or a Jew, or what you please to call me.

Lady P. Why, is not here matter of fact?

Sir P. Ay, but by your own virtue and continency, that matter of fact is all his own doings. I confess I had a great desire to have some honours conferred upon me, which lie all in your ladyship's breast, and he being a well-spoken man, I desired him to intercede for me.———

Lady P. Did you so, presumption? Oh! he comes, the Tarquin comes; I cannot bear his sight! [*Exit.*

Enter CARELESS.

Care. Sir Paul, I am glad I have met with you; 'egad I have said all I could, but cannot prevail—Then my friendship to you has carried me a little further in this matter———

Sir P. Indeed—Well, sir—I'll dissemble with him a little. [*Aside.*

Care. Why, faith, I have in my time known honest gentlemen abused by a pretended coyness in their wives, and I had a mind to try my lady's virtue—And when I could not prevail for you, 'egad, I pretended to be in love myself—but all in vain, she would not hear a word upon that subject; then I writ a letter to her; I don't know what effects that will have, but I'll be sure to tell you when I do; though, by this light, I believe her virtue is impregnable.

Sir P. O Providence! Providence! What discoveries are here made! Why, this is better and more miraculous than the rest.

Care. What do you mean?

Sir P. I cannot tell you, I am so overjoyed; come along with me to my lady; I cannot contain myself; come, my dear friend.

Care. So, so, so, this difficulty's over. [*Aside.*] [*Exeunt.*

Enter MELLEFONT *and* MASKWELL, *from different doors.*

Mel. Maskwell, I have been looking for you—It is within a quarter of eight.

Mask. My lady is just gone into my lord's closet; you had best steal into her chamber before she comes, and lie concealed there, otherwise she may lock the door when we are together, and you not easily get in to surprise us.

Mel. Eh? You say true.

Mask. You had best make haste; for, after she has made some apology to the company for her own and my lord's absence all this while, she'll retire to her chamber instantly.

Mel. I go this moment: Now, Fortune, I defy thee! [*Exit.*

Mask. I confess you may be allowed to be secure in your own opinion; the appearance is very fair, but I have an after-game to play that shall turn the tables, and here comes the man that I must manage.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD.

Ld T. Maskwell, you are the man I wished to meet.

Mask. I am happy to be in the way of your lordship's commands.

Ld T. I have always found you prudent and careful in any thing that has concerned me or my family.

Mask. I were a villain else—I am bound by duty and gratitude, and my own inclination, to be ever your lordship's servant.

Ld T. Enough—You are my friend; I know it: Yet there has been a thing in your knowledge which has concerned me nearly, that you have concealed from me.

Mask. My lord!

Ld. T. Nay I excuse your friendship to my unnatural nephew thus far——But I know you have been privy to his impious designs upon my wife. This evening she has told me all: her good-nature concealed it as long as was possible; but he perseveres so in villainy, that she has told me even you were weary of dissuading him, though you have once actually hindered him from forcing her.

Mask. I am sorry, my lord, I cannot make you an answer; this is an occasion in which I would not willingly be silent.

Ld T. I know you would excuse him, and I know as well that you cannot.

Mask. Indeed I was in hopes it had been but a youthful heat that might have soon boiled over; but—

Ld T. Say on.

Mask. I have nothing more to say, my lord—but to express my concern; for I think his frenzy increases daily.

Ld T. How! give me but proof of it, ocular proof, that I may justify my dealing with him to the world, and share my fortunes.

Mask. O, my lord! consider that is hard: besides, time may work upon him: then, for me to do it! I have professed an everlasting friendship to him.

Ld T. He is your friend, and what am I?

Mask. I am answered.

Ld T Fear not his displeasure; I will put you out of his and fortune's power; and for that thou art scrupulously honest, I will secure thy fidelity to him, and give my honour never to own any discovery that you shall make me. Can you give me a demonstrative proof? speak.

Mask. I wish I could not——To be plain, my

lord, I intended this evening to have tried all arguments to dissuade him from a design which I suspect; and, if I had not succeeded, to have informed your lordship of what I knew.

Ld T. I thank you. What is the villain's purpose?

Mask. He has owned nothing to me of late, and what I mean now is only a bare suspicion of my own. If your lordship will meet me a quarter of an hour hence there, in that lobby by my lady's bed-chamber, I shall be able to tell you more.

Ld T. I will.

Mask. My duty to your lordship makes me do a severe piece of justice.

Ld T. I will be secret, and reward your honesty beyond your hopes. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Opening, shews Lady* TOUCHWOOD'S *Chamber.*

MELLEFONT *solus.*

Mel. Pray heaven my aunt keep touch with her assignation.——Oh, that her lord were but sweating behind this hanging, with the expectation of what I shall see—Hist, she comes—Little does she think what a mine is just ready to spring under her feet.—But, to my post.

[*Goes behind the hangings.*

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. 'Tis eight o'clock: methinks I should have found him here—Who does not prevent the hour of love, outstays the time; for to be duly punctual is too slow.—I was accusing you of neglect.

Enter MASKWELL. MELLEFONT *absconding.*

Mask. I confess you do reproach me when I see you here before me; but 'tis fit I should be still behind-hand, still to be more and more indebted to your goodness.

Lady T. You can excuse a fault too well not to have been to blame—A ready answer shews you were prepared.

Mask. Guilt is ever at a loss, and confusion waits upon it: when innocence and bold truth are always ready for expression———

Lady T. Not in love! words are the weak support of cold indifference; love has no language to be heard.

Mask. Excess of joy has made me stupid!—Thus may my lips be ever closed. [*Kisses her.*]—And thus—Oh, who would not lose his speech upon condition to have joys above it!

Lady T. Hold! let me lock the door first.

[*Goes to the door.*

Mask. [*Aside.*] That I believed; 'twas well I left the private passage open.

Lady T. So, that's safe.

Mask. And so may all your pleasures be, and secret as this kiss——

Mel. And may all treachery be thus discovered.

[*Leaps out.*

Lady T. Ah! [*Shrieks.*

Mel. Villain! [*Offers to draw.*

Mask. Nay, then there's but one way.

[*Runs out.*

Mel. Say you so? were you provided for an escape?—Hold, madam, you have no more holes to your burrow; I stand between you and this sally-port.

Lady T. Thunder strike thee dead for this deceit! Immediate lightning blast thee, me, and the whole world!——Oh! I could rack myself, play the vulture to my own heart, and gnaw it piecemeal, for not boding to me this misfortune!

Mel. Be patient——

Lady T. Be damn'd!

Mel. Consider I have you on the hook; you will but flounder yourself a-weary, and be nevertheless my prisoner.

Lady T. I'll hold my breath and die, but I'll be free.

Mel. O madam, have a care of dying unprepared! I doubt you have some unrepented sins that may hang heavy, and retard your flight.

Lady T. O, what shall I do, say?—whither shall I turn? Has hell no remedy?

Mel. None; hell has served you even as heaven has done, left you to yourself.—You're in a kind of Erasmus' paradise; yet, if you please, you may make it a purgatory; and, with a little penance and my absolution, all this may turn to good account.

Lady T. [*Aside.*] Hold in, my passion, and fall, fall a little, thou swelling heart! let me have some intermission of this rage, and one minute's coolness to dissemble. [*Weeps.*

Mel. You have been to blame——I like those tears, and hope they are of the purest kind—penitential tears.

Lady T. O, the scene was shifted quick before me—I had not time to think—I was surprised to see a monster in the glass, and now I find 'tis myself; can you have mercy to forgive the faults I have imagined, but never put in practice?——O, consider, consider how fatal you have been to me! you have already kill'd the quiet of this life. The love of you was the first wandering fire that e'er misled my steps; and while I had only that in view, I was betray'd into unthought-of ways of ruin.

Mel. May I believe this true?

Lady T. O, be not cruelly incredulous—How can you doubt these streaming eyes?—Keep the severest eye o'er all my future conduct; and if I once relapse, let me not hope forgiveness: 'twill ever be in your power to ruin me.—My lord shall sign to your desires; I will myself create your happiness, and Cynthia shall be this night your bride—Do but conceal my failings, and forgive.

Mel. Upon such terms I will be ever yours in every honest way.

MASKWELL *softly introduces Lord* TOUCHWOOD, *and retires.*

Mask. I have kept my word; he's here; but I must not be seen. [*Exit.*

Ld T. Hell and amazement! she's in tears.

Lady T. [*Kneeling.*] Eternal blessings thank you——Ha! my lord listening! O, fortune has o'erpaid me!—All, all's my own! [*Aside.*

Mel. Nay, I beseech you, rise.

Lady T. [*Aloud.*] Never, never! I'll grow to the ground, be buried quick beneath it, ere I'll be consenting to so damn'd a sin as incest! unnatural incest!

Mel. Ha!

Lady T. O, cruel man! will you not let me go?—I'll forgive all that's past—O Heaven, you will not ravish me!

Mel. Damnation!

Ld T. Monster! dog! your life shall answer this.——[*Draws, and runs at* MELLEFONT—*is held by Lady* TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. O Heavens, my lord!—Hold, hold, for Heaven's sake.

Mel. Confusion! my uncle!—O, the damn'd sorceress!

Lady T. Moderate your rage, good my lord—He's mad, alas, he's mad—Indeed he is, my lord, and knows not what he does—See how wild he looks.

Mel. By Heaven, 'twere senseless not to be mad, and see such witchcraft!

Lady T. My lord, you hear him—he talks idly.

Ld T. Hence from my sight, thou living infamy to my name! when next I see that face, I'll write villain in't with my sword's point.

Mel. Now, by my soul, I will not go till I have made known my wrongs—nay, till I have made known yours, which (if possible) are greater—though she has all the host of hell her servants.

Lady T. Alas, he raves! talks very poetry.—For Heaven's sake, away, my lord! he'll either tempt you to extravagance, or commit some himself.

Mel. Death and furies! will you not hear me?——Why, by Heaven, she laughs, grins, points to your back; she forks out cuckoldom with her fingers, and you're running horn-mad after your fortune.

[*As she is going, she turns back, and smiles at him.*

Ld T. I fear he's mad indeed——Let's send Maskwell to him.

Mel. Send him to her.

Lady T. Come, come, good my lord, my heart aches so, I shall faint if I stay.

[*Exeunt all but* MELLEFONT.

Mel. O, I could curse my stars, fate and chance! all causes of accident and fortune in this life!—But to what purpose?—Yet, 'sdeath! for a man to have the fruit of all his industry grow full and ripe, ready to drop into his mouth, and, just when he holds out his hand to gather it, to have a sudden whirlwind come, tear up tree and all, and bear away the very root and foundation of his hopes; what temper can contain?——They talk of sending Maskwell to me; I never had more need of him—But what can he do? Imagination cannot form a fairer and more plausible design than this of his which has miscarried.——O my precious aunt! I shall never thrive without I deal with the devil, or another woman.—

Women, like flames, have a destroying power,
Ne'er to be quench'd, till they themselves devour. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD *and* MASKWELL.

Lady T. Was't not lucky?

Mask. Lucky! Fortune is your own; and 'tis her interest so to be: By Heaven, I believe you can controul her power, and she fears it; though chance brought my lord, 'twas your own art turn'd it to advantage.

Lady T. 'Tis true; it might have been my ruin.—But yonder's my lord; I believe he's coming to find you; I'll not be seen. [*Exit.*

Mask. So; I durst not own my introducing my lord, though it succeeded well for her; for she would have suspected a design which I should have been puzzled to excuse.——My lord is thoughtful——I'll be so too; yet he shall know my thoughts, or think he does.—

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD, *as unperceived by* MASKWELL.

What have I done?

Ld T. Talking to himself!

Mask. 'Twas honest—and shall I be rewarded for it? No; 'twas honest, therefore I sha'n't;—nay, rather, therefore I ought not; for it rewards itself.

Ld T. Unequall'd virtue! [*Aside.*

Mask. But should it be known—then I have lost a friend.—He was an ill man, and I have gain'd; for half myself I lent him, and that I have recall'd; so I have served myself, and what is yet better, I have served a worthy lord, to whom I owe myself.

Ld T. Excellent man! [*Aside.*

Mask. Yet I am wretched—O, there is a secret burns within this breast, which, should it once blaze forth, would ruin all, consume my honest character, and brand me with the name of villain.

Ld T. Ha!

Mask. Why do I love!—Yet Heaven and my waking conscience are my witnesses, I never gave one working thought a vent, which might discover that I loved, nor ever must—No; let it prey upon my heart; for I would rather die than seem once, barely seem, dishonest.—O, should it once be known I love fair Cynthia, all this that I have done would look like rival's malice, false friend

ship to my lord, and base self-interest—Let me perish first, and from this hour avoid all sight and speech, and, if I can, all thought of that pernicious beauty.—Ha! But what is my distraction doing! I am wildly talking to myself, and some ill chance might have directed malicious ears this way. [*Seems to start, seeing my Lord.*

Ld T. Start not—let guilty and dishonest souls start at the revelation of their thoughts; but be thou fix'd, as is thy virtue.

Mask. I am confounded, and beg your lordship's pardon for those free discourses which I have had with myself.

Ld T. Come, I beg your pardon that I overheard you; and yet it shall not need——Honest Maskwell! thy and my good genius led me hither—mine, in that I have discover'd so much manly virtue; thine, in that thou shalt have due reward of all thy worth.—Give me thy hand—My nephew is the alone remaining branch of all our ancient family; him I thus blow away, and constitute thee in his room to be my heir.

Mask. Now, Heaven forbid——

Ld T. No more—I have resolved—The writings are ready drawn, and wanted nothing but to be sign'd, and have his name inserted—Yours will fill the blank as well—I will have no reply—Let me command this time; for 'tis the last in which I will assume authority——hereafter you shall rule where I have power.

Mask. I humbly would petition——

Ld T. Is't for yourself?—[MASKWELL *pauses.*] I'll hear of nought for any body else.

Mask. Then witness Heaven for me, this wealth and honour was not of my seeking; nor would I build my fortune on another's ruin: I had but one desire——

Ld T. Thou shalt enjoy it—If all I'm worth in wealth or interest can purchase Cynthia, she is thine.—I'm sure Sir Paul's consent will follow fortune; I'll quickly shew him what way that is going.

Mask. You oppress me with bounty; my gratitude is weak, and shrinks beneath the weight, and cannot rise to thank you.—What, enjoy my love! Forgive the transports of a blessing so unexpected, so unhoped-for, so unthought-of!

Ld T. I will confirm it, and rejoice with thee. [*Exit.*

Mask. This is so prosperous indeed——Why, let him find me out a villain, settled in possession of a fair estate, and full fruition of my love, I'll bear the railings of a losing gamester—But should he find me out before! 'Tis dangerous to delay. ——Let me think—Should my lord proceed to treat openly of my marriage with Cynthia, all must be discover'd, and Mellefont can be no longer blinded—It must not be; nay, should my lady know it—ay, then were fine work indeed! Her fury would spare nothing, though she involved herself in ruin.—No; it must be by stratagem. I must deceive Mellefont once more, and get my lord to consent to my private management.—He comes opportunely—Now will I, in my old way, discover the whole and real truth of the matter to him, that he may not suspect one word on't.—

No mask like open truth to cover lies,
As to go naked is the best disguise.

Enter MELLEFONT.

Mel. O Maskwell, what hopes? I am confounded in a maze of thoughts, each leading into one another, and all ending in perplexity. My uncle will not see nor hear me.

Mask. No matter, sir; don't trouble your head; all is in my power.

Mel. How, for heaven's sake?

Mask. Little do you think that your aunt has kept her word——How the devil she wrought my lord into this dotage I know not; but he is gone to Sir Paul about my marriage with Cynthia, and has appointed me his heir.

Mel. The devil he has! What's to be done?

Mask. I have it, it must be by stratagem; for it is in vain to make application to him. I think I have that in my head which cannot fail. Where is Cynthia?

Mel. In the garden.

Mask. Let us go and consult her:—My life for your's, I cheat my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord and Lady TOUCHWOOD.

Lady T. Maskwell your heir, and marry Cynthia!

Ld T. I cannot do too much for so much merit.

Lady T. But this is a thing of too great moment to be so suddenly resolved. Why Cynthia? Why must he be married? Is there not reward enough in raising his low fortune, but he must mix his blood with mine, and wed my niece? How know you that my brother will consent, or she? Nay, he himself perhaps may have affections otherwhere.

Ld T. No, I am convinced he loves her.

Lady T. Maskwell love Cynthia, impossible!

Ld T. I tell you he confessed it to me.

Lady T. Confusion! How is this! [*Aside.*

Ld T. His humility long stifled his passion; and his love of Mellefont would have made him still conceal it; but by encouragement I wrung the secret from him, and know he is no way to be rewarded but in her. I will defer my farther proceedings in it till you have considered it: but remember how we are both indebted to him. [*Exit.*

Lady T. Both indebted to him! Yes, we are both indebted to him, if you knew all. Villain! Oh, I am wild with this surprise of treachery: it is impossible, it cannot be—He love Cynthia!—What, have I been bawd to his designs! his property only, a baiting-place! Now I see what made him false to Mellefont—Shame and distraction! I cannot bear it. Oh! What woman can bear to be a property? To be kindled to a flame, only to light him to another's arms: Oh! that I were fire indeed, that I might burn the vile traitor.—What shall I do? How shall I think? I cannot think——All my designs are lost, my love unsa-

ted, my revenge unfinished, and fresh cause of fury from unthought-of plagues.

Enter Sir PAUL.

Sir P. Madam, sister, my lady sister, did you see my lady, my wife?

Lady T. Oh! torture!

Sir P. Gads-bud, I cannot find her high nor low: Where can she be, think you?

Lady T. Where she is serving you as all your sex ought to be served; making you a beast.—Don't you know that you are a fool, brother?

Sir P. A fool! he, he, he, you are merry—No, no, not I, I know no such matter.

Lady T. Why then you don't know half your happiness.

Sir P. That's a jest with all my heart, faith and troth—But hark ye, my lord told me something of a revolution of things; I don't know what to make on't——Gads-bud, I must consult my wife—He talks of disinheriting his nephew, and I don't know what———Look you, sister, I must know what my girl has to trust to; or not a syllable of a wedding, gads-bud—to shew you that I am not a fool.

Lady T. Hear me; consent to the breaking off this marriage, and the promoting any other, without consulting me, and I will renounce all blood, all relation and concern with you for ever—Nay, I'll be your enemy, and pursue you to destruction; I'll tear your eyes out, and tread you under my feet.

Sir P. Why, what's the matter now? Good lord, what's all this for? Pooh, here's a joke indeed——Why, where's my wife?

Lady T. With Careless, in the close arbour; he may want you by this time, as much as you want her.

Sir P. Oh, if she be with Mr Careless, 'tis well enough.

Lady T. Fool, sot, insensible ox! But remember what I said to you, or you had better eat your own horns, by this light you had.

Sir P. You are a passionate woman, Gads-bud ——But to say truth, all our family are choleric; I am the only peaceable person amongst them.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter MELLEFONT, MASKWELL, *and* CYNTHIA.

Mel. I know no other way but this he has proposed; if you have love enough to run the venture.

Cyn. I don't know whether I have love enough —but I find I have obstinacy enough to pursue whatever I have once resolved; and a true female courage to oppose any thing that resists my will, though it were reason itself.

Mask. That's right——Well, I'll secure the writings, and run the hazard along with you.

Cyn. But how can the coach and six horses be got ready without suspicion?

Mask. Leave it to my care; that shall be so far from being suspected, that it shall be got ready by my lord's own order.

Mel. How?

Mask. Why, I intend to tell my lord the whole matter of our contrivance, that's my way.

Mel. I do not understand you.

Mask. Why, I'll tell my lord, I laid this plot with you on purpose to betray you; and that which put me upon it, was the finding it impossible to gain the lady any other way, but in the hopes of her marrying you.

Mel. So———

Mask. So, why so, while you are busied in making yourself ready, I'll wheedle her into the coach; and instead of you, borrow my lord's chaplain, and so run away with her myself.

Mel. Oh, I conceive you, you'll tell him so?

Mask. Tell him so! Ay, why, you don't think I mean to do so?

Mel. No, no; ha, ha, I dare swear thou wilt not.

Mask. Therefore, for our farther security, I would have you disguised like a parson, that, if my lord should have curiosity to peep, he may not discover you in the coach, but think the cheat is carried on as he would have it.

Mel. Excellent Maskwell! thou wert certainly meant for a statesman or a jesuit—but thou art too honest for one, and too pious for the other.

Mask. Well, get yourselves ready, and meet me in half an hour, yonder, in my lady's dressing-room; go by the back-stairs, and so we may slip down without being observed—I'll send the chaplain to you with his robes; I have made him my own—and ordered him to meet us to-morrow morning at St Alban's; there we will sum up this account to all our satisfactions.

Mel. Should I begin to thank or praise thee, I should waste the little time we have. [*Exit.*

Mask. Madam, you will be ready.

Cyn. I will be punctual to the minute. [*Going.*

Mask. Stay, I have a doubt——Upon second thoughts, we had better meet in the chaplain's chamber here, the corner chamber at this end of the gallery; there is a back way into it, so that you need not come through this door——and a pair of private stairs leading down to the stables ——it will be more convenient.

Cyn. I am guided by you—but Mellefont will mistake.

Mask. No, no, I'll after him immediately, and tell him.

Cyn. I will not fail. [*Exit.*

Mask. Why, *qui vult decipi decipiatur.*—'Tis no fault of mine, I have told them in plain terms how easy it is for me to cheat them; and if they will not hear the serpent's hiss, they must be stung into experience and future caution.——Now to prepare my lord to consent to this.——But first I must instruct my little Levite; there is no plot, public or private, that can expect to prosper without one of them has a finger in it; he promised me to be within at this hour—Mr Saygrace, Mr Saygrace!

[*Goes to the chamber-door, and knocks.*

Say. [*Looking out.*] Sweet sir, I will but pen

the last line of an acrostic, and be with you in the twinkling of an ejaculation, in the pronouncing of an *Amen*, or before you can——

Mask. Nay, good Mr Saygrace, do not prolong the time by describing to me the shortness of your stay; rather, if you please, defer the finishing of your wit, and let us talk about our business; it shall be tithes in your way.

Enter SAYGRACE.

Say. You shall prevail; I would break off in the middle of a sermon to do you a pleasure.

Mask. You could not do me a greater—except ——the business in hand—— Have you provided a habit for Mellefont?

Say. I have; they are ready in my chamber, together with a clean starched band and cuffs.

Mask. Good: let them be carried to him—Have you stitched the gown-sleeve, that he may be puzzled, and waste time in putting it on?

Say. I have; the gown will not be endued without perplexity.

Mask. Meet me in half an hour, here, in your own chamber. When Cynthia comes, let there be no light; and do not speak, that she may not distinguish you from Mellefont. I'll urge haste to excuse your silence.

Say. You have no more commands?

Mask. None—your text is short.

Say. But pithy, and I will handle it with discretion.

Mask. It will be the first you have so served.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD *and* MASKWELL.

Ld T. Sure I was born to be controuled by those I should command: my very slaves will shortly give me rules how I shall govern them.

Mask. I'm concerned to see your lordship so discomposed——

Ld T. Have you seen my wife lately, or disobliged her?

Mask. No, my lord.—What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Ld T. Then Mellefont has urged somebody to incense her——Something she has heard of you, which carries her beyond the bounds of patience.

Mask. This I feared. [*Aside.*] Did not your lordship tell her of the honours you designed me?

Ld T. Yes.

Mask. 'Tis that; you know my lady has a high spirit, she thinks I am unworthy.

Ld T. Unworthy! 'Tis an ignorant pride in her to think so—Honesty to me is true nobility. However, 'tis my will it shall be so, and that should be convincing to her as much as reason—By heaven, I'll not be wife-ridden! Were it possible, it should be done this night.

Mask. By heaven he meets my wishes! [*Aside.*] Few things are impossible to willing minds.

Ld T. Instruct me how this may be done, you shall see I want no inclination.

Mask. I had laid a small design for to-morrow (as love will be inventing) which I thought to communicate to your lordship—But it may be as well done to-night.

Ld T. Here is company—Come this way, and tell me. [*Exeunt.*

Enter CARELESS *and* CYNTHIA.

Care. Is not that he, now gone out with my lord?

Cyn. Yes.

Care. By Heaven, there's treachery——The confusion that I saw your father in, my Lady Touchwood's passion, with what imperfectly I overheard between my lord and her, confirm me in my fears.—Where's Mellefont?

Cyn. Here he comes.

Enter MELLEFONT.

—Did Maskwell tell you any thing of the chaplain's chamber?

Mel. No; my dear, will you get ready?—The things are all in my chamber; I want nothing but the habit.

Care. You are betray'd, and Maskwell is the villain I always thought him.

Cyn. When you were gone, he said his mind was changed, and bid me meet him in the chaplain's room, pretending immediately to follow you, and give you notice.

Care. There's Saygrace tripping by with a bundle under his arm: He cannot be ignorant that Maskwell means to use his chamber; let's follow and examine him.

Mel. 'Tis loss of time: I cannot think him false.

[*Exeunt* MELLEFONT *and* CARELESS.

Enter Lord TOUCHWOOD.

Cyn. My lord, musing!

Ld T. He has a quick invention, if this were suddenly designed——Yet he says he had prepared my chaplain already.

Cyn. How is this!—Now I fear indeed.

Ld T. Cynthia here!—Alone, fair cousin, and melancholy?

Cyn. Your lordship was thoughtful.

Ld T. My thoughts were on serious business, not worth your hearing.

Cyn. Mine were on treachery concerning you, and may be worth your hearing.

Ld T. Treachery concerning me! Pray, be plain——Hark! What noise!

Mask. [*Within.*] Will you not hear me?

Lady T. [*Within.*] No, monster! traitor! no.

Cyn. My lady and Maskwell! This may be lucky—My lord, let me entreat you to stand behind this screen and listen; perhaps this chance may give you proof of what you never could have believed from my suspicions.

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD, *with a dagger, and* MASKWELL——CYNTHIA *and Lord* TOUCHWOOD *abscond, listening.*

Lady T. You want but leisure to invent fresh falsehood, and sooth me to a fond belief of all your fictions; but I will stab the lie that's form-

ing in your heart, and save a sin in pity to your soul.

Mask. Strike then, since you will have it so.

Lady T. Ha! a steady villain to the last!

Mask. Come, why do you dally with me thus?

Lady T. Thy stubborn temper shocks me, and you know it would——This is cunning all, and not courage; no, I know thee well——But thou shalt miss thy aim.

Mask. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady T. Ha! Do you mock my rage! Then this shall punish your fond, rash contempt——Again smile! [*Goes to strike.*

And such a smile as speaks in ambiguity;
Ten thousand meanings lurk in each corner of that various face.
O! that they were written in thy heart,
That I, with this, might lay thee open to my sight.
But then 'twill be too late to know——
Thou hast, thou hast found the only way to turn my rage; too well thou knowest my jealous soul could never bear uncertainty.—Speak then, and tell me——Yet are you silent?—Oh, I am wilder'd in all passions!—But thus my anger melts. [*Weeps.*]—Here, take this poniard; for my very spirits faint, and I want strength to hold it—thou hast disarm'd my soul. [*Gives the dagger.*

Ld T. Amazement shakes me——Where will this end?

Mask. So, 'tis well—let your wild fury have a vent, and when you have temper, tell me.

Lady T. Now, now, now I am calm, and can hear you.

Mask. [*Aside.*] Thanks, my invention: and now I have it for you.——First tell me, what urged you to this violence? For your passion broke out in such imperfect terms, that yet I am to learn the cause.

Lady T. My lord himself surprised me with the news, you were to marry Cynthia—that you had own'd your love to him, and his indulgence would assist you to attain your ends.

Cyn. How, my lord!

Ld T. Pray forbear all resentments for a while, and let us hear the rest.

Mask. I grant you in appearance all is true; I seem'd consenting to my lord, nay, transported with the blessing——But could you think that I, who had been happy in your loved embraces, could e'er be fond of inferior slavery?

Cyn. Nay, good my lord, forbear resentment; let us hear it out.

Ld T. Yes, I will contain, though I could burst.

Mask. I that had wanton'd in the rich circle of your world of love, could be confined within the puny province of a girl? No——Yet though I dote on each last favour more than all the rest, though I would give a limb for every look you cheaply throw away on any other object of your love; yet so far I prize your pleasures o'er my own, that all this seeming plot that I have laid has been to gratify your taste and cheat the world, to prove a faithful rogue to you.

Lady T. If this were true——But how can it be?

Mask. I have so contrived, that Mellefont will presently, in the chaplain's habit, wait for Cynthia in your dressing-room: but I have put the change upon her, that she may be otherwise employ'd——Do you procure her night-gown, and with your hoods tied over your face, meet him in her stead; you may go privately by the back stairs, and, unperceived, there you may propose to reinstate him in his uncle's favour, if he will comply with your desires; his case is desperate, and I believe he'll yield to any conditions——If not, here, take this; you may employ it better than in the heart of one who is nothing when not yours. [*Gives the dagger.*

Lady T. Thou canst deceive every body—nay, thou hast deceived me; but 'tis as I could wish. —Trusty villain, I could worship thee.

Mask. No more—it wants but a few minutes of the time, and Mellefont's love will carry him there before his hour.

Lady T. I go, I fly—Incomparable Maskwell! [*Exit.*

Mask. So, this was a pinch indeed; my invention was upon the rack, and made discovery of her last plot—I hope Cynthia and my chaplain will be ready. I'll prepare for the expedition. [*Exit.*

CYNTHIA *and Lord* TOUCHWOOD *come forward.*

Cyn. Now, my lord!

Ld T. Astonishment binds up my rage! Villainy upon villainy! Heavens, what a long track of dark deceit has this discover'd! I am confounded when I look back, and want a clue to guide me through the various mazes of unheard-of treachery——My wife! Damnation! my hell!

Cyn. My lord, have patience, and be sensible how great our happiness is, that this discovery was not made too late.

Ld T. I thank you; yet it may be still too late, if we don't presently prevent the execution of their plots——Ha! I'll do it.—Where is Mellefont, my poor injured nephew? How shall I make him ample satisfaction?

Cyn. I dare answer for him.

Ld T. I do him fresh wrong to question his forgiveness, for I know him to be all goodness. ——Yet my wife! Damn her! She'll think to meet him in that dressing-room—Was't not so? and Maskwell will expect you in the chaplain's chamber——For once I'll add my plot too—Let us haste to find out, and inform my nephew; and do you, quickly as you can, bring all the company into this gallery—I'll expose the strumpet and the villain. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Lord FROTH *and Sir* PAUL.

Ld F. By Heavens, I have slept an age——Sir Paul, what o'clock is it? past eight?——On my conscience, my lady's is the most inviting couch, and a slumber there is the prettiest amusement! —But where is all the company?

Sir P. The company! Gads-bud, I don't know, my lord; but here's the strangest revolution—all turn'd topsy-turvy, as I hope for Providence.

Ld F. O Heavens! what's the matter? Where is my wife?

Sir P. All turn'd topsy-turvy, as sure as a gun.

Ld F. How do you mean? My wife?

Sir P. The strangest posture of affairs—

Ld F. What, my wife?

Sir P. No, no, I mean the family. Your lady's affairs may be in a very good posture; I saw her go into the garden with Mr Brisk.

Ld F. How? Where? when? what to do?

Sir P. I suppose they have been laying their heads together.

Ld F. How?

Sir P. Nay, only about poetry, I suppose, my lord—making couplets.

Ld F. Couplets!

Sir P. O, here they come!

Enter Lady FROTH *and* BRISK.

Brisk. My lord, your humble servant; Sir Paul, yours——The finest night—

Lady F. My dear, Mr Brisk and I have been star-gazing I don't know how long.

Sir P. Does it not tire your ladyship? Are not you weary with looking up?

Lady F. O no; I love it violently—My dear, you are melancholy.

Ld F. No, my dear, I am but just awake.

Lady F. Snuff some of my spirit of hartshorn.

Ld F. I have some of my own, thank you, my dear.

Lady F. Well, I swear, Mr Brisk, you understand astronomy like an old Egyptian.

Brisk. Not comparably to your ladyship; you are the very Cynthia of the skies, and queen of stars.

Lady F. That's because I have no light, but what's by reflection from you, who are the sun.

Brisk. Madam, you have eclipsed me quite; let me perish, I cannot answer that.

Lady F. No matter—Hark'e, shall you and I make an almanack together?

Brisk. With all my soul—Your ladyship has made me the man in it already, I am so full of the wounds which you have given.

Lady F. O, finely taken! I swear now you are even with me—O Parnassus! you have an infinite deal of wit.

Sir P. So he has, gads-bud, and so has your ladyship.

Enter Lady PLYANT, CARELESS, *and* CYNTHIA.

Lady P. You tell me most surprising things—Bless me, who would ever trust a man? Oh, my heart aches for fear they should be all deceitful alike!

Care. You need not fear, madam; you have charms to fix inconstancy itself.

Lady P. O dear, you make me blush.

Ld F. Come, my dear, shall we take leave of my lord and lady?

Cyn. They'll wait upon your lordship presently.

Lady F. Mr Brisk, my coach shall set you down.

All. What's the matter?

[*A great shriek from the corner of the stage.*

Enter Lady TOUCHWOOD, *and runs out affrighted, my Lord after her, like a parson.*

Lady T. I'm betrayed—Save me, help me!

Ld T. Now what evasion, strumpet?

Lady T. Stand off, let me go.

Ld T. Go, and thy own infamy pursue thee—You stare as you were all amazed—I do not wonder at it——But too soon you'll know mine and that woman's shame.

Enter MELLEFONT, *disguised in a parson's habit, and pulling in* MASKWELL.

Mel. Nay, by heaven you shall be seen—Careless, your hand—Do you hold down your head? Yes, I am your chaplain; look in the face of your injured friend, thou wonder of all falsehood.

Ld T. Are you silent, monster?

Mel. Good heavens! how I believed and loved this man!—Take him hence, for he is a disease to my sight.

Ld T. Secure that manifold villain.

[*Servants seize him.*

Care. Miracle of ingratitude!

Brisk. This is all very surprising, let me perish.

Lady F. You know I told you Saturn looked a little more angry than usual.

Ld T. We'll think of punishment at leisure, but let me hasten to do justice, in rewarding virtue and wronged innocence.—Nephew, I hope I have your pardon and Cynthia's.

Mel. We are your lordship's creatures.

Ld T. And be each other's comfort:—Let me join your hands——Unwearied nights and wishing days attend you both; mutual love, lasting health, and circling joys, tread round each happy year of your long lives.

Let secret villainy from hence be warned,
Howe'er in private mischiefs are conceived,
Torture and shame attend their open birth;
Like vipers in the womb, base treachery lies
Still gnawing that whence first it did arise;
No sooner born, but the vile parent dies.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

COULD poets but foresee how plays would take,
Then they could tell what epilogues to make;
Whether to thank or blame their audience most:
But that late knowledge does much hazard cost,
'Till dice are thrown, there's nothing won, nor lost.
So till the thief has stolen, he cannot know
Whether he shall escape the law or no.
But poets run much greater hazards far,
Than they who stand their trials at the bar;
The law provides a curb for its own fury,
And suffers judges to direct the jury.
But in this court, what difference does appear!
For every one's both judge and jury here;
Nay, and what's worse, an executioner.
All have a right and title to some part,
Each choosing that in which he has most art.
The dreadful men of learning all confound,
Unless the fable's good and moral sound.
The vizor masks that are in pit and gallery,
Approve or damn the repartée and raillery.
The lady critics, who are better read,
Inquire if characters are nicely bred;
If the soft things are penned and spoke with grace:
They judge of action too, and time and place;
In which we do not doubt but they're discerning,
For that's a kind of assignation learning.
Beaux judge of dress; the witlings judge of songs;
The cuckoldom, of ancient right, to cits belongs.
Thus poor poets the favour are denied,
Even to make exceptions, when they're tried.
'Tis hard that they must every one admit:
Methinks I see some faces in the pit,
Which must of consequence be foes to wit.
You who can judge, to sentence may proceed;
But though he cannot write, let him be freed,
At least, from their contempt who cannot read.

LOVE FOR LOVE.

BY

CONGREVE.

PROLOGUE.

The husbandman in vain renews his toil,
To cultivate each year a hungry soil;
And fondly hopes for rich and generous fruit,
When what should feed the tree devours the root:
Th' unladen boughs, he sees, bode certain dearth,
Unless transplanted to more kindly earth.
So, the poor husbands of the stage, who found
Their labours lost upon ungrateful ground,
This last and only remedy have proved,
And hope new fruit from ancient stocks removed.
Well may they hope, when you so kindly aid,
Well plant a soil which you so rich have made.
As Nature gave the world to man's first age,
So from your bounty we receive this stage;
The freedom man was born to, you've restored,
And to our world such plenty you afford,
It seems like Eden, fruitful of its own accord.
But since in paradise frail flesh gave way,
And when but two were made, both went astray;
Forbear your wonder, and the fault forgive,
If, in our larger family, we grieve
One falling Adam, and one tempted Eve.
We who remain would gratefully repay,
What our endeavours can, and bring this day
The first-fruit offering of a virgin play:
We hope there's something that may please each taste,
And though of homely fare we make the feast,
Yet you will find variety at least.
There's humour, which for cheerful friends we got,
And for the thinking party there's a plot.
We've something too to gratify ill-nature,
(If there be any here)—and that is satire;
Though satire scarce dares grin, 'tis grown so mild,
Or only shews its teeth, as if it smiled.
As asses thistles, poets mumble wit,
And dare not bite, for fear of being bit.
They hold their pens, as swords are held by fools,
And are afraid to use their own edge-tools.
Since the Plain Dealer's scenes of manly rage,
Not one has dared to lash this crying age.
This time, the poet owns the bold essay.
Yet hopes there's no ill-manners in his play:
And he declares by me, he has designed
Affront to none; but frankly speaks his mind.
And, should the ensuing scenes not chance to hit,
He offers but this one excuse—'twas writ
Before your late encouragement of wit.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Sir SAMPSON LEGEND.
VALENTINE.
SCANDAL.
TATTLE.
BEN.
FORESIGHT.
JEREMY.
TRAPLAND.
BUCKRAM.

WOMEN.

ANGELICA.
Mrs FORESIGHT.
Mrs FRAIL.
Miss PRUE.
Nurse.
JENNY.

A Steward, Officers, Sailors, and several Servants.

SCENE,—*London.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—VALENTINE *in his Chamber reading;* JEREMY *waiting. Several Books upon the Table.*

Val. Jeremy!

Jer. Sir.

Val. Here, take away! I'll walk a turn, and digest what I have read.—

Jer. You'll grow devilish fat upon this paper diet! [*Aside, and taking away the books.*

Val. And, d'ye hear? go you to breakfast—There's a page doubled down in Epictetus, that is a feast for an emperor.

Jer. Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

Val. Read, read, sirrah, and refine your appetite; learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind, and mortify your flesh. Read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding. So Epictetus advises.

Jer. O Lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. Pray what was that Epictetus?

Val. A very rich man—not worth a groat.

Jer. Humph! and so he has made a very fine feast, where there is nothing to be eaten.

Val. Yes.

Jer. Sir, you're a gentleman, and probably understand this fine feeding: but, if you please, I had rather be at board wages. Does your Epictetus, or your Seneca here, or any of these poor rich rogues, teach you how to pay your debts without money? Will they shut up the mouths of your creditors? Will Plato be bail for you? or Diogenes, because he understands confinement, and lived in a tub, go to prison for you? 'Slife, sir, what do you mean to mew yourself up here with three or four musty books in commendation of starving and poverty?

Val. Why, sirrah, I have no money, you know it; and therefore resolve to rail at all that have: and in that I but follow the examples of the wisest and wittiest men in all ages—these poets and philosophers, whom you naturally hate, for just such another reason; because they abound in sense, and you are a fool.

Jer. Ay, sir, I am a fool, and I know it: and yet, Heaven help me, I'm poor enough to be a wit.—But I was always a fool, when I told you what your expences would bring you to; your coaches and your liveries; your treats and your balls; your being in love with a lady that did not care a farthing for you in your prosperity; and keeping company with wits, that cared for nothing but your prosperity, and now, when you are poor, hate you as much as they do one another.

Val. Well! and now I am poor, I have an opportunity to be revenged on them all; I'll pursue Angelica with more love than ever, and appear more notoriously her admirer in this restraint, than when I openly rivalled the rich fops that made court to her. So shall my poverty be a mortification to her pride, and perhaps make her compassionate the love, which has principally reduced me to this lowness of fortune. And for the wits, I'm sure I am in a condition to be even with them.

Jer. Nay, your condition is pretty even with theirs, that's the truth on't.

Val. I'll take some of their trade out of their hands.

Jer. Now Heaven of mercy continue the tax upon paper!—You don't mean to write?

Val. Yes, I do; I'll write a play.

Jer. Hem!—Sir, if you please to give me a small certificate of three lines—only to certify those whom it may concern, That the bearer hereof, Jeremy Fetch by name, has, for the space of seven years, truly and faithfully served Valentine Legend, Esquire; and that he is not turned away for any misdemeanour, but does voluntarily dismiss his master from any future authority over him—

Val. No, sirrah; you shall live with me still.

Jer. Sir, it's impossible—I may die with you, starve with you, or be damned with your works: but to live, even three days, the life of a play, I no more expect it, than to be canonized for a muse after my decease.

Val. You are witty, you rogue, I shall want your help—I'll have you learn to make couplets, to tag the ends of acts. D'ye hear? get the maids to crambo in an evening, and learn the knack of rhyming; you may arrive at the height of a song sent by an unknown hand, or a chocolate-house lampoon.

Jer. But, sir, is this the way to recover your father's favour? Why, Sir Sampson will be irreconcileable. If your younger brother should come from sea, he'd never look upon you again. You're undone, sir; you're ruined; you won't have a friend left in the world, if you turn poet—Ah, pox confound that Will's coffee-house, it has ruined more young men than the Royal Oak lottery!—Nothing thrives that belongs to it. The man of the house would have been an alderman by this time, with half the trade, if he had set up in the city.—For my part, I never sit at the door, that I don't get double the stomach that I do at a horse-race. The air upon Banstead Downs is nothing to it for a whetter; yet I never see it, but the spirit of famine appears to me—sometimes like a decayed porter, worn out with pimping, and carrying billet-doux and songs; not like other

porters for hire, but for the jest's sake.—Now, like a thin chairman, melted down to half his proportion, with carrying a poet upon tick, to visit some great fortune; and his fare to be paid him, like wages of sin, either at the day of marriage, or the day of death.

Val. Very well, sir; can you proceed?

Jer. Sometimes like a bilked bookseller, with a meagre terrified countenance, that looks as if he had written for himself, or were resolved to turn author, and bring the rest of his brethren into the same condition. And, lastly, in the form of a worn-out punk, with verses in her hand, which her vanity had preferred to settlements, without a whole tatter to her tail, but as ragged as one of the muses; or as if she was carrying her linen to the paper-mill, to be converted into folio books of warning to all young maids, not to prefer poetry to good sense; or lying in the arms of a needy wit, before the embraces of a wealthy fool.

Enter SCANDAL.

Scan. What! Jeremy holding forth?

Val. The rogue has (with all the wit he could muster up) been declaiming against wit.

Scan. Ay? Why then I'm afraid Jeremy has wit; for, wherever it is, it's always contriving its own ruin.

Jer. Why so I have been telling my master, sir. Mr Scandal, for Heaven's sake, sir, try if you can dissuade him from turning poet!

Scan. Poet! He shall turn soldier first, and rather depend upon the outside of his head, than the lining! Why, what the devil! has not your poverty made you enemies enough? must you needs shew your wit to get more?

Jer. Ay, more indeed: for who cares for any body that has more wit than himself?

Scan. Jeremy speaks like an oracle. Don't you see how worthless great men, and dull rich rogues, avoid a witty man of small fortune? Why, he looks like a writ of inquiry into their titles and estates; and seems commissioned by Heaven to seize the better half.

Val. Therefore I would rail in my writings, and be revenged.

Scan. Rail! at whom? the whole world? Impotent and vain! Who would die a martyr to sense, in a country where the religion is folly? You may stand at bay for a while; but, when the full cry is against you, you sha'n't have fair play for your life. If you cann't be fairly run down by the hounds, you will be treacherously shot by the huntsmen. No, turn pimp, flatterer, quack, lawyer, parson, be chaplain to an atheist, or stallion to an old woman, any thing but poet. A modern poet is worse, more servile, timorous, and fawning, than any I have named, without you could retrieve the ancient honours of the name, recal the stage of Athens, and be allowed the force of open honest satire.

Val. You are as inveterate against our poets, as if your character had been lately exposed upon the stage.—Nay, I am not violently bent upon the trade.—[*One knocks.*] Jeremy, see who's there. [JER. *goes to the door.*]—But tell me what you would have me do?—What do the world say of me, and my forced confinement?

Scan. The world behaves itself, as it uses to do on such occasions. Some pity you, and condemn your father; others excuse him and blame you. Only the ladies are merciful, and wish you well: since love and pleasurable expence have been your greatest faults.

JEREMY *returns.*

Val. How now?

Jer. Nothing new, sir. I have dispatched some half a dozen duns with as much dexterity as an hungry judge does causes at dinner-time.

Val. What answer have you given them?

Scan. Patience, I suppose—the old receipt?

Jer. No, faith, sir: I have put them off so long with patience and forbearance, and other fair words, that I was forced to tell them in plain downright English—

Val. What?

Jer. That they should be paid.

Val. When?

Jer. To-morrow.

Val. And how the devil do you mean to keep your word?

Jer. Keep it! not at all: it has been so very much stretched, that I reckon it will break of course by to-morrow, and nobody be surprised at the matter!—[*Knocking.*]—Again, sir! If you don't like my negociation, will you be pleased to answer these yourself?

Val. See who they are. [*Exit* JEREMY.] By this, Scandal, you may see what it is to be great. Secretaries of state, presidents of the council, and generals of an army, lead just such a life as I do; have just such crowds of visitants in a morning, all soliciting of past promises; which are but a civiller sort of duns, that lay claim to voluntary debts.

Scan. And you, like a truly great man, having engaged their attendance, and promised more than ever you intended to perform, are more perplexed to find evasions, than you would be to invent the honest means of keeping your word, and gratifying your creditors.

Val. Scandal, learn to spare your friends, and do not provoke your enemies. This liberty of your tongue will one day bring confinement on your body, my friend.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. O, sir, there's Trapland the scrivener, with two suspicious fellows like lawful pads, that would knock a man down with pocket tipstaves! ——And there's your father's steward, and the nurse, with one of your children from Twit'nam.

Val. Pox on her! could she find no other time to fling my sins in my face? Here! give her this, [*Gives money.*] and bid her trouble me no more;

a thoughtless, two-handed whore! She knows my condition well enough, and might have overlaid the child a fortnight ago, if she had any forecast in her.

Scan. What, is it bouncing Margery with my god-son?

Jer. Yes, sir.

Scan. My blessing to the boy, with this token [*Gives money.*] of my love. And, d'ye hear, bid Margery put more flocks in her bed, shift twice a week, and not work so hard, that she may not smell so vigorously.—I shall take the air shortly.

Val. Scandal, don't spoil my boy's milk.—Bid Trapland come in. If I can give that Cerberus a sop, I shall be at rest for one day.

[JEREMY *goes out, and brings in* TRAPLAND.

Val. O, Mr Trapland! my old friend! welcome,—Jeremy, a chair quickly: a bottle of sack and a toast—fly—a chair first.

Trap. A good morning to you, Mr Valentine; and to you, Mr Scandal.

Scan. the morning's a very good morning, if you don't spoil it.

Val. Come, sit you down; you know his way.

Trap. [*Sits.*] There is a debt, Mr Valentine, of fifteen hundred pounds, of pretty long standing.

Val. I cannot talk about business with a thirsty palate. Sirrah! the sack!

Trap. And I desire to know what course you have taken for the payment.

Val. Faith and troth, I am heartily glad to see you—my service to you! fill, fill, to honest Mr Trapland—fuller!

Trap. Hold! sweetheart—this is not our business.—My service to you, Mr Scandal—[*Drinks.*]—I have forborn as long—

Val. T'other glass, and then we'll talk—Fill, Jeremy.

Trap. No more, in truth—I have forborn, I say—

Val. Sirrah! fill when I bid you.—And how does your handsome daughter?—Come, a good husband to her. [*Drinks.*

Trap. Thank you—I have been out of this money—

Val. Drink first. Scandal, why do you not drink? [*They drink.*

Trap. And, in short, I can be put off no longer.

Val. I was much obliged to you for your supply: it did me signal service in my necessity. But you delight in doing good. Scandal, drink to me, my friend Trapland's health. An honester man lives not, nor one more ready to serve his friend in distress, though I say it to his face. Come, fill each man his glass.

Scan. What! I know Trapland has been a whore-master, and loves a wench still. You never knew a whore-master that was not an honest fellow.

Trap. Fie, Mr Scandal, you never knew—

Scan. What don't I know?——I know the buxom black widow in the Poultry—Eight hundred pounds a-year jointure, and twenty thousand pounds in money. Ahah! old Trap!

Val. Say you so, i'faith? Come we'll remember the widow: I know whereabouts you are; come, to the widow.

Trap. No more indeed.

Val. What! the widow's health? Give it him—off with it. [*They drink.*]—A lovely girl, i'faith; black sparkling eyes, soft pouting ruby lips! Better sealing there than a bond for a million, ha!

Trap. No, no, there's no such thing; we'd better mind our business—You're a wag!

Val. No faith, we'll mind the widow's business: fill again.—Pretty round heaving breasts, a Barbary shape, and a jut with her bum, would stir an anchorite; and the prettiest foot! Oh, if a man could but fasten his eyes on her feet as they steal in and out, and play at bo-peep under her petticoats—ha! Mr Trapland!

Trap. Verily, give me a glass—you're a wag—and here's to the widow. [*Drinks.*

Scan. He begins to chuckle—ply him close, or he'll relapse into a dun.

Enter Officer.

Offi. By your leave, gentlemen.—Mr Trapland, if we must do our office, tell us.—We have half a dozen gentlemen to arrest in Pall-mall and Covent-garden; and if we don't make haste, the chairmen will be abroad, and block up the chocolate-houses; and then our labour's lost.

Trap. Odso, that's true. Mr Valentine, I love mirth; but business must be done; are you ready to——

Jer. Sir, your father's steward says he comes to make proposals concerning your debts.

Val. Bid him come in: Mr Trapland, send away your officer; you shall have an answer presently.

Trap. Mr Snap, stay within call.

[*Exit Officer.*

Enter Steward, who whispers VALENTINE.

Scan. Here's a dog now, a traitor in his wine! Sirrah, refund the sack: Jeremy, fetch him some warm water; or I'll rip up his stomach, and go the shortest way to his conscience.

Trap. Mr Scandal, you are uncivil. I did not value your sack; but you cannot expect it again, when I have drunk it.

Scan. And how do you expect to have your money again, when a gentleman has spent it?

Val. You need say no more. I understand the conditions: they are very hard, but my necessity is very pressing: I agree to them. Take Mr Trapland with you, and let him draw the writing—Mr Trapland, you know this man? he shall satisfy you.

Trap. Sincerely, I am loth to be thus pressing; but my necessity—

Val. No apology, good Mr Scrivener, you shall be paid.

Trap. I hope you forgive me; my business requires———

[*Exeunt* TRAPLAND, *Steward, and* JEREMY.

Scan. He begs pardon like a hangman at an execution.

Val. But I have got a reprieve.

Scan. I am surprised; what! does your father relent?

Val. No; he has sent me the hardest condition in the world. You have heard of a booby brother of mine, that was sent to sea three years ago? This brother, my father hears, is landed; whereupon he very affectionately sends me word, if I will make a deed of conveyance of my right to his estate after his death to my younger brother, he will immediately furnish me with four thousand pounds to pay my debts, and make my fortune This was once proposed before, and I refused it; but the present impatience of my creditors for their money, and my own impatience of confinement, and absence from Angelica, force me to consent.

Scan. A very desperate demonstration of your love to Angelica! and I think she has never given you any assurance of hers.

Val. You know her temper; she never gave me any great reason either for hope or despair.

Scan. Women of her airy temper, as they seldom think before they act, so they rarely give us any light to guess at what they mean: but you have little reason to believe that a woman of this age, who has had an indifference for you in your prosperity, will fall in love with your ill-fortune. Besides, Angelica has a great fortune of her own; and great fortunes either expect another great fortune, or a fool.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. More misfortunes, sir.

Val. What, another dun?

Jer. No, sir; but Mr Tattle is come to wait upon you.

Val. Well, I cannot help it—you must bring him up; he knows I don't go abroad.

[*Exit* JER.

Scan. Pox on him! I'll be gone.

Val. No, pr'ythee stay: Tattle and you should never be asunder; you are light and shadow, and shew one another. He is perfectly thy reverse both in humour and understanding; and, as you set up for defamation, he is a mender of reputations.

Scan. A mender of reputations! ay, just as he is a keeper of secrets, another virtue that he sets up for in the same manner. For the rogue will speak aloud in the posture of a whisper; and deny a woman's name, while he gives you the marks of her person. He will forswear receiving a letter from her, and at the same time shew you her hand in the superscription: and yet perhaps he has counterfeited her hand too, and sworn to a truth; but he hopes not to be believed; and refuses the reputation of a lady's favour, as a doctor says no to a bishoprick, only that it may be granted him.—In short, he is a public professor of secrecy, and makes proclamation that he holds private intelligence.—He is here.

Enter TATTLE.

Tat. Valentine, good morrow: Scandal, I am yours—that is, when you speak well of me.

Scan. That is, when I am yours? for, while I am my own, or any body's else, that will never happen.

Tat. How inhuman!

Val. Why, Tattle, you need not be much concerned at any thing that he says: for to converse with Scandal, is to play at Losing Loadum; you must lose a good name to him, before you can win it for yourself.

Tat. But how barbarous that is, and how unfortunate for him, that the world should think the better of any person for his calumniation!—I thank Heaven, it has always been a part of my character to handle the reputations of others very tenderly indeed.

Scan. Ay, such rotten reputations as you have to deal with are to be handled tenderly indeed.

Tat. Nay, why rotten? why should you say rotten, when you know not the persons of whom you speak? How cruel that is!

Scan. Not know them? Why, thou never hadst to do with any one that did not stink to all the town.

Tat. Ha, ha, ha! nay, now you make a jest of it indeed. For there is nothing more known, than that nobody knows any thing of that nature of me. As I hope to be saved, Valentine, I never exposed a woman, since I knew what woman was.

Val. And yet you have conversed with several?

Tat. To be free with you I have—I don't care if I own that—nay, more (I'm going to say a bold word now), I never could meddle with a woman that had to do with any body else.

Scan. How!

Val. Nay, faith, I'm apt to believe him—except her husband, Tattle.

Tat. Oh that—

Scan. What think you of that noble commoner, Mrs Drab?

Tat. Pooh! I know madam Drab has made her brags in three or four places, that I said this and that, and writ to her, and did I know not what—but, upon my reputation, she did me wrong—well, well, that was malice—but I know the bottom of it. She was bribed to that by one we all know—a man too—only to bring me into disgrace with a certain woman of quality—

Scan. Whom we all know.

Tat. No matter for that—Yes, yes, every body knows—no doubt on't, every body knows my secrets!—But I soon satisfied the lady of my innocence; for I told her—Madam, says I, there are some persons who make it their business to tell stories, and say this and that of one and the other, and every thing in the world; and, says I, if your grace—

Scan. Grace!

Tat. O Lord, what have I said!——My unlucky tongue!

Val. Ha, ha, ha!

Scan. Why, Tattle, thou hast more impudence than one can in reason expect: I shall have an esteem for thee—well, and, ha, ha, ha! well, go on, and what did you say to her grace?

Val. I confess this is something extraordinary.

Tat. Not a word, as I hope to be saved; an arrant *lapsus linguæ!*—Come, let us talk of something else.

Val. Well, but how did you acquit yourself?

Tat. Pooh, pooh, nothing at all, I only rallied with you.—A woman of ordinary rank was a little jealous of me, and I told her something or other—faith, I know not what,—Come, let's talk of something else. [*Hums a song.*

Scan. Hang him, let him alone; he has a mind we should inquire.

Tat. Valentine, I supped last night with your mistress, and her uncle old Foresight: I think your father lies at Foresight's.

Val. Yes.

Tat. Upon my soul, Angelica's a fine woman.——And so is Mrs Foresight, and her sister Mrs Frail.

Scan. Yes, Mrs Frail is a very fine woman; we all know her.

Tat. Oh, that is not fair.

Scan. What?

Tat. To tell.

Scan. To tell what? Why, what do you know of Mrs Frail?

Tat. Who I? Upon honour I don't know whether she be a man or woman, but by the smoothness of her chin, and roundness of her hips.

Scan. No!

Tat. No.

Scan. She says otherwise.

Tat. Impossible!

Scan. Yes, faith. Ask Valentine else.

Tat. Why then, as I hope to be saved, I believe a woman only obliges a man to secrecy, that she may have the pleasure of telling herself.

Scan. No doubt of it. Well, but has she done you wrong, or no? You have had her, ha?

Tat. Though I have more honour than to tell first, I have more manners than to contradict what a lady has declared.

Scan. Well, you own it?

Tat. I am strangely surprised! Yes, yes! I cannot deny it, if she taxes me with it.

Scan. She'll be here by and by; she sees Valentine every morning.

Tat. How!

Val. She does me the favour—I mean, of a visit sometimes. I did not think she had granted more to any body.

Scan. Nor I, faith. But Tattle does not use to belie a lady; it is contrary to his character.—How one may be deceived in a woman, Valentine!

Tat. Nay, what do you mean, gentlemen?

Scan. I'm resolved I'll ask her.

Tat. O barbarous! Why did you not tell me—

Scan. No, you told us.

Tat. And bid me ask Valentine?

Val. What did I say? I hope you won't bring me to confess an answer, when you never asked me the question!

Tat. But, gentlemen, this is the most inhuman proceeding.——

Val. Nay, if you have known Scandal thus long, and cannot avoid such a palpable decoy as this was, the ladies have a fine time, whose reputations are in your keeping.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, Mrs Frail has sent to know if you are stirring.

Val. Shew her up when she comes. [*Exit* JER.

Tat. I'll be gone.

Val. You'll meet her.

Tat. Is there not a back way!

Val. If there were, you have more discretion than to give Scandal such an advantage; why, your running away will prove all that he can tell her.

Tat. Scandal, you will not be so ungenerous—O, I shall lose my reputation of secrecy for ever.—I shall never be received but upon public days; and my visits will never be admitted beyond a drawing-room; I shall never see a bed-chamber again, never be locked in a closet, nor run behind a screen, or under a table; never be distinguished among the waiting women by the name of trusty Mr Tattle more.——You will not be so cruel?

Val. Scandal, have pity on him; he'll yield to any conditions.

Tat. Any, any terms.

Scan. Come then, sacrifice half a dozen women of good reputation to me presently.——Come, where are you familiar?——And see that they are women of quality too, the first quality.

Tat. 'Tis very hard.—Won't a baronet's lady pass?

Scan. No, nothing under a right honourable.

Tat. O inhuman! You don't expect their names?

Scan. No, their titles shall serve.

Tat. Alas, that is the same thing. Pray spare me their titles; I'll describe their persons.

Scan. Well, begin then. But take notice, if you are so ill a painter, that I cannot know the person by your picture of her, you must be condemned, like other bad painters, to write the name at the bottom.

Tat. Well, first then———

Enter Mrs FRAIL.

O unfortunate! she's come already. Will you have patience till another time?—I'll double the number.

Scan. Well, on that condition—Take heed you don't fail me.

Mrs F. I shall get a fine reputation, by coming to see fellows in a morning! Scandal, you devil, are you here too? Oh, Mr Tattle, every thing is safe with you, we know.

Scan. Tattle!

Tat. Mum——O madam, you do me too much honour.

Val. Well, Lady Galloper, how does Angelica?

Mrs F. Angelica?—Manners!

Val. What, you will allow an absent lover—

Mrs F. No, I'll allow a lover present with his mistress to be particular—but otherwise I think his passion ought to give place to his manners.

Val. But what if he has more passion than manners?

Mrs F. Then let him marry, and reform.

Val. Marriage indeed may qualify the fury of his passion; but it very rarely mends a man's manners.

Mrs F. You are the most mistaken in the world: there is no creature perfectly civil, but a husband: for in a little time he grows only rude to his wife; and that is the highest good breeding, for it begets his civility to other people. Well, I'll tell you news; but, I suppose, you heard your brother Benjamin is landed. And my brother Foresight's daughter is come out of the country—I assure you, there's a match talked of by the old people.—Well, if he be but as great a sea beast, as she is a land monster, we shall have a most amphibious breed—the progeny will be all otters: he has been bred at sea, and she has never been out of the country.

Val. Pox take them! their conjunction bodes me no good, I'm sure.

Mrs F. Now you talk of conjunction, my brother Foresight has cast both their nativities, and prognosticates an admiral and an eminent justice of the peace to be the issue male of their two bodies. 'Tis the most superstitious old fool! He would have persuaded me, that this was an unlucky day, and would not let me come abroad: but I invented a dream, and sent him to Artemidorus for interpretation, and so stole out to see you. Well, and what will you give me now? Come, I must have something.

Val. Step into the next room—and I'll give you something.

Scan. Ay, we'll all give you something.

Mrs F. Well, what will you give me?

Val. Mine's a secret.

Mrs F. I thought you would give me something that would be a trouble to you to keep.

Val. And Scandal shall give you a good name.

Mrs F. That's more than he has for himself. And what will you give me, Mr Tattle?

Tat. I! My soul, madam.

Mrs F. Pooh, no, I thank you, I have enough to do to take care of my own. Well; but I'll come and see you one of these mornings: I hear, you have a great many pictures.

Tat. I have a pretty good collection, at your service; some originals.

Scan. Hang him, he has nothing but the Seasons and the Twelve Cæsars, paltry copies; and the Five Senses, as ill represented as they are in himself; and he himself is the only original you will see there.

Mrs F. Ay, but I hear he has a closet of beauties.

Scan. Yes, all that have done him favours, if you will believe him.

Mrs F. Ay, let me see those, Mr Tattle.

Tat. Oh, madam, those are sacred to love and contemplation. No man but the painter and myself was ever blest with the sight.

Mrs F. Well, but a woman—

Tat. Nor woman, till she consented to have her picture there too—for then she is obliged to keep the secret.

Scan. No, no! come to me if you'd see pictures.

Mrs F. You?

Scan. Yes, faith, I can shew your own picture, and most of your acquaintance, to the life, and as like as at Kneller's.

Mrs F. O lying creature!—Valentine, does not he lie?—I can't believe a word he says.

Val. No, indeed, he speaks truth now; for, as Tattle has pictures of all that have granted him favours, he has the pictures of all that have refused him—if satires, descriptions, characters, and lampoons, are pictures.

Scan. Yes, mine are most in black and white—and yet there are some set out in their true colours, both men and women. I can shew you pride, folly, affectation, wantonness, inconstancy, covetousness, dissimulation, malice, and ignorance, all in one piece. Then I can shew you lying, foppery, vanity, cowardice, bragging, lechery, impotence, and ugliness, in another piece; and yet one of these is a celebrated beauty, and t'other a professed beau. I have paintings too, some pleasant enough.

Mrs F. Come, let's hear them.

Scan. Why, I have a beau in a bagnio, cupping for a complexion, and sweating for a shape.

Mrs F. So!

Scan. Then I have a lady burning brandy in a cellar with a hackney-coachman.

Mrs F. O devil! Well, but that story is not true.

Scan. I have some hieroglyphicks too. I have a lawyer, with a hundred hands, two heads, and but one face; a divine, with two faces, and one head; and I have a soldier, with his brains in his belly, and his heart where his head should be.

Mrs F. And no head?

Scan. No head.

Mrs F. Pooh, this is all invention. Have you never a poet?

Scan. Yes, I have a poet, weighing words, and selling praise for praise: and a critic picking his pocket. I have another large piece too, representing a school; where there are huge proportioned critics, with long wigs, laced coats, Steinkirk cravats, and terrible faces; with catcalls in their hands, and horn-books about their necks. I have many more of this kind, very well painted, as you shall see.

Mrs F. Well, I'll come, if it be but to disprove you.

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, here's the steward again from your father.

Val. I'll come to him.—Will you give me leave? I'll wait on you again presently.

Mrs F. No, I'll be gone. Come, who squires

me to the Exchange? I must call on my sister Foresight there.

Scan. I will: I have a mind to your sister.

Mrs F. Civil!

Tat. I will; because I have a *tendre* for your ladyship.

Mrs F. That's somewhat the better reason, to my opinion.

Scan. Well, if Tattle entertains you, I have the better opportunity to engage your sister.

Val. Tell Angelica, I am about making hard conditions, to come abroad, and be at liberty to see her.

Scan. I'll give an account of you and your proceedings. If indiscretion be a sign of love, you are the most of a lover of any body that I know. You fancy that parting with your estate will help you to your mistress—In my mind he is a thoughtless adventurer,

Who hopes to purchase wealth by selling land;
Or win a mistress with a losing hand. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* FORESIGHT'S *House.*

Enter FORESIGHT *and Servant.*

For. Hey-day! What, are all the women of my family abroad? Is not my wife come home? nor my sister? nor my daughter?

Serv. No, sir.

For. Mercy on us! what can be the meaning of it? Sure the moon is in all her fortitudes! Is my niece Angelica at home?

Serv. Yes, sir.

For. I say, you lie, sir. It is impossible that any thing should be as I would have it; for I was born, sir, when the Crab was ascending; and all my affairs go backward.

Serv. I cann't tell indeed, sir.

For. No, I know you cann't sir. But I can tell and foretell, sir.

Enter Nurse.

For. Nurse, where's your young mistress?

Nurse. Wee'st heart! I know not; they're none of them come yet. Poor child, I warrant she's fond of seeing the town!——Marry, pray Heaven they have given her any dinner!—Good lack-a-day, ha, ha, ha! O strange; I'll vow and swear now, ha, ha, ha! marry, and did you ever see the like?

For. Why, how now, what's the matter?

Nurse. Pray Heaven send your worship good luck! marry, and amen, with all my heart! for you have put on one stocking with the wrong side outward.

For. Ha, how? Faith and troth I'm glad of it; and so I have; that may be good luck in troth; in troth it may, very good luck; nay, I have had some omens. I got out of bed backwards too this morning, without premeditation; pretty good that too. But then I stumbled coming down stairs, and met a weasel; bad omens those! Some bad, some good; our lives are chequered: mirth and sorrow, want and plenty, night and day, make up our time.—But, in troth, I am pleased at my stocking—very well pleased at my stocking!—Oh, here's my niece!—Sirrah, go tell Sir Sampson Legend I'll wait on him if he's at leisure—'Tis now three o'clock, a very good hour for business; Mercury governs this hour. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter ANGELICA.

Ang. Is it not a good hour for pleasure, too, uncle? Pray lend me your coach; mine's out of order.

For. What, would you be gadding too? Sure all females are mad to-day.—It is of evil portent, and bodes mischief to the master of a family.—I remember an old prophecy written by Messahalah the Arabian, and thus translated by a reverend Buckinghamshire bard:

When housewives all the house forsake,
And leave good men to brew and bake,
Withouten guile, then be it said,
That house doth stand upon its head;
And when the head is set in ground,
No mar'l if it be fruitful found.

Fruitful, the head fruitful! that bodes horns; the fruit of the head is horns. Dear niece, stay at home—for by the head of the house is meant the husband; the prophecy needs no explanation.

Ang. Well, but I can neither make you a cuckold, uncle, by going abroad; nor secure you from being one by staying at home.

For. Yes, yes; while there's one woman left, the prophecy is not in full force.

Ang. But my inclinations are in force. I have a mind to go abroad; and if you won't lend me your coach, I'll take a hackney, or a chair; and leave you to erect a scheme, and find who's in conjunction with your wife. Why don't you keep her at home, if you're jealous of her when she's abroad? You know my aunt is a little retrograde (as you call it) in her nature. Uncle, I'm afraid you are not lord of the ascendant! ha, ha, ha!

For. Well, jill-flirt, you are very pert—and always ridiculing that celestial science.

Ang. Nay, uncle, don't be angry—If you are, I'll rip up all your false prophecies, ridiculous dreams, and idle divinations. I'll swear, you are a nuisance to the neighbourhood.—What a bustle did you keep against the last invisible eclipse, laying in provision, as it were for a siege! What a world of fire and candle, matches and tinder-boxes, did you purchase!—One would have

thought we were ever after to live under ground; or at least make a voyage to Greenland, to inhabit there all the dark season.

For. Why, you malapert slut!

Ang. Will you lend me your coach? or I'll go on.—Nay, I'll declare how you prophesied popery was coming, only because the butler had mislaid some of the apostle spoons, and thought they were lost. Away went religion and spoon-meat together!—Indeed, uncle, I'll indict you for a wizard.

For. How, hussy! was there ever such a provoking minx!

Nurse. O merciful father, how she talks!

Ang. Yes, I can make oath of your unlawful midnight practices; you and the old nurse there.

Nurse. Marry, Heaven defend!—I at midnight practices!—O Lord, what's here to do?—I in unlawful doings with my master's worship!—Why, did you ever hear the like now?—Sir, did ever I do any thing of your midnight concerns, but warm your bed, and tuck you up, and set the candle and your tobacco-box and your urinal by you, and now and then rub the soles of your feet?—O Lord, I!—

Ang. Yes, I saw you together, through the key-hole of the closet, one night, like Saul and the witch of Endor, turning the sieve and sheers, and pricking your thumbs, to write poor innocent servants' names in blood, about a little nutmeg-grater, which she had forgot in the caudle-cup.—Nay, I know something worse, if I would speak of it!

For. I defy you, hussy; but I'll remember this. I'll be revenged on you, cockatrice; I'll hamper you—You have your fortune in your own hands—but I'll find a way to make your lover, your prodigal spendthrift gallant, Valentine, pay for all, I will.

Ang. Will you? I care not; but all shall out then.—Look to it, nurse; I can bring witness that you have a great unnatural teat under your left arm, and he another; and that you suckle a young devil, in the shape of a tabby cat, by turns; I can.

Nurse. A teat, a teat, I an unnatural teat! O the false, slanderous thing! Feel, feel here, if I have any thing but like another christian! [*Crying.*

For. I will have patience, since it is the will of the stars I should be thus tormented—this is the effect of the malicious conjunctions and oppositions in the third house of my nativity; there the curse of kindred was foretold.—But I will have my doors locked up—I'll punish you; not a man shall enter my house.

Ang. Do, uncle, lock them up quickly, before my aunt comes home—you'll have a letter for alimony to-morrow morning!—But let me be gone first; and then let no mankind come near the house; but converse with spirits and the celestial signs, the bull and the ram, and the goat. Bless me, there are a great many horned beasts among the twelve signs, uncle! But cuckolds go to Heaven!

For. But there's but one virgin among the twelve signs, spit-fire!—but one virgin!

Ang. Nor there had not been that one, if she had had to do with any thing but astrologers, uncle! That makes my aunt go abroad.

For. How! how! is that the reason? Come, you know something; tell me, and I'll forgive you; do, good niece.—Come, you shall have my coach and horses—faith and troth, you shall.—Does my wife complain? Come, I know women tell one another.—She is young and sanguine, has a wanton hazel eye, and was born under Gemini, which may incline her to society; she has a mole upon her lip, with a moist palm, and an open liberality on the mount of Venus.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha!

For. Do you laugh?—Well, gentlewoman, I'll—But come, be a good girl, don't perplex your poor uncle! Tell me—won't you speak?—Odd, I'll———

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Sampson is coming down, to wait upon you, sir. [*Exit.*

Ang. Good b'ye, uncle.—Call me a chair.—I'll find out my aunt, and tell her, she must not come home. [*Exit.*

For. I am so perplexed and vexed, I am not fit to receive him; I shall scarce recover myself before the hour be past. Go, nurse; tell Sir Sampson I'm ready to wait on him.

Nurse. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

For. Well—why, if I was born to be a cuckold, there's no more to be said!—He is here already.

Enter Sir SAMPSON LEGEND *with a paper.*

Sir S. Nor no more to be done, old boy, that is plain—here it is, I have it in my hand, old Ptolomy; I'll make the ungracious prodigal know who begat him; I will, old Nostrodamus. What, I warrant, my son thought nothing belonged to a father, but forgiveness and affection; no authority, no correction, no arbitrary power—nothing to be done, but for him to offend, and me to pardon! I warrant you, if he danced till doomsday, he thought I was to pay the piper. Well, but here it is under black and white, *signatum, sigillatum*, and *deliberatum*—that, as soon as my son Benjamin is arrived, he is to make over to him his right of inheritance.—Where's my daughter that is to be—ha! old Merlin? Body of me, I'm so glad I'm revenged on this undutiful rogue!

For. Odso, let me see; let me see the paper.—Ay, faith and troth, here it is, if it will but hold—I wish things were done, and the conveyance made.—When was this signed? what hour? Odso, you should have consulted me for the time. Well, but we'll make haste.

Sir S. Haste! ay, ay, haste enough; my son Ben will be in town to-night—I have ordered my lawyer to draw up writings of settlement and jointure—all shall be done to-night.—No matter for the time; pr'ythee, brother Foresight, leave superstition.—Pox o' th' time; there's no time but the time present; there's no more to be said of what's past; and all that is to come will happen. If the sun shine by day, and the stars by night—why, we shall know one another's faces without the help of a candle; and that's all the stars are good for.

For. How, how, Sir Sampson? that all? Give me leave to contradict you, and tell you, you are ignorant.

Sir S. I tell you, I am wise: and *sapiens dominabitur astris*; there's Latin for you to prove it, and an argument to confound your Ephemeris.—Ignorant!—I tell you, I have travelled, old Fercu: and know the globe. I have seen the Antipodes, where the sun rises at mid-night, and sets at noon-day.

For. But I tell you, I have travelled, and travelled in the celestial spheres; know the signs and the planets, and their houses: can judge of motions direct and retrograde, of sextiles, quadrates, trines and oppositions; fiery trigons, and aquatical trigons; know whether life shall be long or short, happy or unhappy; whether diseases are curable or incurable; if journies shall be prosperous, undertakings successful, or goods stolen recovered: I know——

Sir S. I know the length of the emperor of China's foot; have kissed the Great Mogul's slipper, and rid a hunting upon an elephant with the cham of Tartary.—Body o'me, I have made a cuckold of a king; and the present majesty of Bantam is the issue of these loins.

For. I know when travellers lie or speak truth, when they don't know it themselves.

Sir S. I have known an astrologer made a cuckold in the twinkling of a star; and seen a conjuror, that could not keep the devil out of his wife's circle.

For. What, does he twit me with my wife too! I must be better informed of this. [*Aside.*]—Do you mean my wife, Sir Sampson? Though you made a cuckold of the king of Bantam, yet, by the body of the sun——

Sir S. By the horns of the moon, you would say, brother Capricorn.

For. Capricorn in your teeth, thou modern Mandeville; Ferdinand Mendez Pinto was but a type of thee, thou liar of the first magnitude! Take back your paper of inheritance; send your son to sea again. I'll wed my daughter to an Egyptian mummy, ere she shall incorporate with a contemner of sciences, and a defamer of virtue.

Sir S. Body o'me, I have gone too far—I must not provoke honest Albumazar.——An Egyptian mummy is an illustrious creature, my trusty hieroglyphick; and may have significations of futurity about him. Odsbud, I would my son were an Egyptian mummy for thy sake. What, thou art not angry for a jest, my good Haly?—I reverence the sun, moon, and stars, with all my heart.——What! I'll make thee a present of a mummy.—Now I think on't, body o'me, I have a shoulder of an Egyptian king, that I purloined from one of the pyramids, powdered with hieroglyphicks; thou shalt have it brought home to thy house, and make an entertainment for all the Philomaths, and students in physic and astrology, in and about London.

For. But what do you know of my wife, Sir Sampson?

Sir S. Thy wife is a constellation of virtues; she is the moon, and thou art the man in the moon; nay, she is more illustrious than the moon; for she has her chastity, without her incontinency.—'Sbud, I was but in jest.

Enter JEREMY.

Sir S. How now? Who sent for you, ha? what would you have?

For. Nay, if you were but in jest——Who's that fellow? I don't like his physiognomy.

Sir S. [*To* JEREMY.] My son, sir! What son, sir? My son Benjamin, ha?

Jer. No, sir; Mr Valentine, my master—It is the first time he has been abroad since his confinement; and he comes to pay his duty to you.

Sir S. Well, sir.

Enter VALENTINE.

Jer. He is here, sir.

Val. Your blessing, sir.

Sir S. You've had it already, sir; I think I sent it you to-day in a bill of four thousand pounds—A great deal of money, brother Foresight.

For. Ay, indeed, Sir Sampson; a great deal of money for a young man; I wonder what he can do with it.

Sir S. Body o' me, so do I.——Hark'e, Valentine, if there be too much, refund the superfluity; dost hear, boy?

Val. Superfluity, sir! It will scarce pay my debts.—I hope you will have more indulgence, than to oblige me to those hard conditions which my necessity sign'd to.

Sir S. Sir! how, I beseech you, what were you pleased to intimate concerning indulgence?

Val. Why, sir, that you would not go to the extremity of the conditions, but release me at least from some part.

Sir S. O, sir, I understand you—that's all, ha?

Val. Yes, sir, all that I presume to ask—But what you, out of fatherly fondness, will be pleased to add, will be doubly welcome.

Sir S. No doubt of it, sweet sir; but your filial piety and my fatherly fondness would fit like two tallies.—Here's a rogue, brother Foresight, makes a bargain under hand and seal in the morning, and would be released from it in the afternoon! Here's a rogue, dog; here's conscience and honesty! This is your wit now, this is the morality of your wit! You are a wit, and have been a beau, and may be a——Why, sirrah, is it not here under hand and seal? Can you deny it?

Val. Sir, I don't deny it.

Sir S. Sirrah, you'll be hang'd; I shall live to see you go up Holborn-hill—Has he not a rogue's face?—Speak, brother; you understand physiognomy—a hanging look to me—of all my boys, the most unlike me—He has a damn'd Tyburn face, without the benefit of the clergy.

For. Hum—Truly, I don't care to discourage a young man—He has a violent death in his face, but I hope no danger of hanging.

Val. Sir, is this usage for your son?—For that old weather-headed fool, I know how to laugh at him; but you, sir——

Sir S. You, sir; and you, sir—Why, who are you, sir?

Val. Your son, sir.

Sir S. That's more than I know, sir; and I believe not.

Val. Faith, I hope not.

Sir S. What, would you have your mother a whore?—Did you ever hear the like; did you ever hear the like? Body o' me

Val. I would have an excuse for your barbarity and unnatural usage.

Sir S. Excuse!—Impudence!—Why, sirrah, mayn't I do what I please? are not you my slave? did not I beget you? and might not I have chosen whether I would have begot you or no?—Oons, who are you? whence came you? what brought you into the world? how came you here, sir? here, to stand here, upon those two legs, and look erect with that audacious face, hah? Answer me that.—Did you come a volunteer into the world? or did I, with the lawful authority of a parent, press you to the service?

Val. I know no more why I came, than you do why you call'd me. But here I am; and, if you don't mean to provide for me, I desire you would leave me as you found me.

Sir S. With all my heart Come, uncase, strip, and go naked out of the world, as you came into it.

Val. My clothes are soon put off; but you must also divest me of my reason, thought, passions, inclinations, affections, appetites, senses, and the huge train of attendants that you begot along with me.

Sir S. Body o' me, what a many-headed monster have I propagated!

Val. I am of myself, a plain, easy, simple creature; and to be kept at small expence: but the retinue that you gave me are craving and invincible; they are so many devils that you have raised, and will have employment.

Sir S. Oons, what had I to do to get children?—Cann't a private man be born without all these followers?——Why, nothing under an emperor should be born with appetites—Why, at this rate, a fellow that has but a groat in his pocket may have a stomach capable of a ten shilling ordinary.

Jer. Nay, that's as clear as the sun; I'll make oath of it before any justice in Middlesex.

Sir S. Here's a cormorant too!—'Sheart, this fellow was not born with you?—I did not beget him, did I?

Jer. By the provision that's made for me, you might have begot me too—Nay, and to tell your worship another truth, I believe you did; for I find I was born with those same whoreson appetites too that my master speaks of.

Sir S. Why, look you there now!—I'll maintain it, that, by the rule of right reason, this fellow ought to have been born without a palate.—'Sheart, what should he do with a distinguishing taste?—I warrant now, he'd rather eat a pheasant than a piece of poor John—And smell now; why, I warrant he can smell, and loves perfumes above a stink—why there's it, and music—don't you love music, scoundrel?

Jer. Yes, I have a reasonable good ear, sir, as to jiggs and country dances, and the like: I don't much matter your solo's or sonata's; they give me the spleen.

Sir S. The spleen! ha, ha, ha! a pox confound you!—Solo's or sonata's! Oons, whose son are you? how were you engender'd, muckworm?

Jer. I am, by my father, the son of a chairman; my mother sold oysters in winter, and cucumbers in summer; and I came up stairs into the world; for I was born in a cellar.

For. By your looks, you shall go up stairs out of the world too, friend.

Sir S. And if this rogue were anatomized now, and dissected, he has his vessels of digestion and concoction, and so forth, large enough for the inside of a cardinal—this son of a cucumber!——These things are unaccountable and unreasonable.——Body o' me, why was I not a bear, that my cubs might have lived upon sucking their paws! Nature has been provident only to bears and spiders: the one has its nutriment in its own hands; the other spins its habitation out of its own entrails.

Val. Fortune was provident enough to supply all the necessities of my nature, if I had my right inheritance.

Sir S. Again!——Oons, han't you four thousand pounds?——If I had it again, I would not give thee a groat.——What, wouldst thou have me turn pelican, and feed thee out of my own vitals?—Odsheart, live by your wits—you were always fond of the wits.—Now let's see if you have wit enough to keep yourself.—Your brother will be in town to-night, or to-morrow morning; and then look you perform covenants; and so your friend and servant.—Come, brother Foresight. [*Exeunt Sir* SAMPSON *and* FORESIGHT.

Jer. I told you what your visit would come to.

Val. 'Tis as much as I expected. I did not come to see him: I came to see Angelica; but since she was gone abroad, it was easily turn'd another way, and at least look'd well on my side.—What's here? Mrs Foresight and Mrs Frail! They are earnest; I'll avoid them.—Come this way, and go and enquire when Angelica will return. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs FORESIGHT *and Mrs* FRAIL.

Mrs F. What have you to do to watch me? 'Slife, I'll do what I please.

Mrs For. You will?

Mrs F. Yes, marry, will I.—A great piece of business to go to Covent-Garden, to take a turn in a hackney-coach with one's friend!

Mrs For. Nay, two or three turns, I'll take my oath.

Mrs F. Well, what if I took twenty?—I warrant, if you had been there, it had only been innocent recreation.—Lord, where's the comfort of this life, if we cann't have the happiness of conversing where we like?

Mrs For. But cann't you converse at home?

I own it, I think there's no happiness like conversing with an agreeable man; I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your conversation was very innocent. But the place is public; and to be seen with a man in a hackney-coach is scandalous. What if any body else should have seen you alight, as I did? How can any body be happy, while they are in perpetual fear of being seen and censured? Besides, it would not only reflect upon you, sister, but on me.

Mrs F. Pooh, here's a clutter! Why should it reflect upon you?—I don't doubt but you have thought yourself happy in a hackney-coach before now.—If I had gone to Knightsbridge, or to Chelsea, or to Spring-garden, or to Barn-elms, with a man alone—something might have been said.

Mrs For. Why, was I ever in any of those places? What do you mean, sister?

Mrs F. Was I? What do you mean?

Mrs For. You have been at a worse place.

Mrs F. I at a worse place! and with a man?

Mrs For. I suppose you would not go alone to the World's-end.

Mrs F. The World's-end! What, do you mean to banter me?

Mrs For. Poor innocent! you don't know that there is a place call'd the World's-end. I'll swear you can keep your countenance purely; you'd make an admirable player.

Mrs F. I'll swear you have a great deal of confidence, and in my mind too much for the stage.

Mrs For. Very well, that will appear who has most.—You never were at the World's-end?

Mrs F. No.

Mrs For. You deny it positively to my face?

Mrs F. Your face! What's your face?

Mrs For. No matter for that; it's as good a face as yours.

Mrs F. Not by a dozen years wearing.—But I do deny it positively to your face then.

Mrs For. I'll allow you now to find fault with my face; for I'll swear your impudence has put me out of countenance.——But look you here now; where did you lose this gold bodkin?—O, sister, sister!

Mrs F. My bodkin!

Mrs For. Nay, 'tis yours; look at it.

Mrs F. Well, if you go to that, where did you find this bodkin?—O, sister, sister!—sister every way!

Mrs For. O, devil on't! that I could not discover her without betraying myself! [*Aside.*

Mrs F. I have heard gentlemen say, sister, that one should take great care, when one makes a thrust in fencing, not to lay open one's self.

Mrs For. It is very true, sister. Well, since all's out, and, as you say, since we are both wounded, let us do what is often done in duels, take care of one another, and grow better friends than before.

Mrs F. With all my heart.—Ours are but slight flesh wounds; and, if we keep them from air, not at all dangerous.—Well, give me your hand, in token of sisterly secrecy and affection.

Mrs For. Here it is, with all my heart.

Mrs F. Well, as an earnest of friendship and confidence, I'll acquaint you with a design that I have.—To tell truth, and speak openly to one another, I am afraid the world have observed us more than we have observed one another. You have a rich husband, and are provided for: I am at a loss, and have no great stock either of fortune or reputation, and therefore must look sharply about me. Sir Sampson has a son, that is expected to-night; and, by the account I have heard of his education, can be no conjuror. The estate, you know, is to be made over to him.—Now, if I could wheedle him, sister, ha? you understand me?

Mrs For. I do; and will help you, to the utmost of my power.—And I can tell you one thing that falls out luckily enough; my awkward daughter-in-law, who, you know, is designed to be his wife, is grown fond of Mr Tattle; now, if we can improve that, and make her have an aversion for the booby, it may go a great way towards his liking you.—Here they come together; and let us contrive some way or other to leave them together.

Enter TATTLE *and Miss* PRUE.

Miss P. Mother, mother, mother, look you here!

Mrs For. Fie, fie, miss, how you bawl!—Besides, I have told you, you must not call me mother.

Miss P. What must I call you then? are you not my father's wife?

Mrs For. Madam; you must say madam—By my soul, I shall fancy myself old indeed, to have this great girl call me mother.—Well, but, miss, what are you so overjoy'd at?

Miss P. Look you here, madam, then, what Mr Tattle has given me—Look you here, cousin; here's a snuff-box; nay, there's snuff in't—here, will you have any?—O, good! how sweet it is!—Mr Tattle is all over sweet; his peruke is sweet, and his gloves are sweet—and his handkerchief is sweet, pure sweet, sweeter than roses——Smell him, mother—madam, I mean—He gave me this ring for a kiss.

Tat. O fie, miss! you must not kiss and tell.

Miss P. Yes; I may tell my mother—and he says he will give me something to make me smell so—O, pray lend me your handkerchief—Smell, cousin; he says he'll give me something that will make my smocks smell this way—Is not it pure?—It's better than lavender, mun—I'm resolved I won't let nurse put any more lavender among my smocks—ha, cousin?

Mrs F. Fie, miss! amongst your linen, you must say; you must never say smock.

Miss P. Why, it is not bawdy, is it, cousin?

Tat. O, madam, you are too severe upon miss: you must not find fault with her pretty simplicity; it becomes her strangely.—Pretty miss, don't let them persuade you out of your innocency.

Mrs For. O, dem you, toad! I wish you don't persuade her out of her innocency.

Tat. Who I, madam? O Lord, how can your ladyship have such a thought?—Sure you don't know me.

Mrs F. Ah, devil, sly devil!—He's as close, sister, as a confessor—He thinks we don't observe him.

Mrs For. A cunning cur!—How soon he could find out a fresh, harmless creature—and left us, sister, presently!

Tat. Upon reputation——

Mrs F. They're all so, sister, these men—they love to have the spoiling of a young creature; they are as fond of it as of being in the first fashion, or of seeing a new play the first day.—I warrant it would break Mr Tattle's heart, to think that any body else should be before-hand with him.

Tat. O Lord! I swear I would not for the world——

Mrs F. O, hang you! who'll believe you?—You'll be hang'd before you'd confess—we know you—she's very pretty—Lord, what pure red and white!—she looks so wholesome—Ne'er stir—I don't know; but I fancy, if I were a man——

Miss P. How you love to jeer one, cousin.

Mrs For. Hark'e, sister—by my soul, the girl is spoil'd already—D'ye think she'll ever endure a great lubberly tarpawlin?——Gad, I warrant you she won't let him come near her, after Mr Tattle.

Mrs F. On my soul, I'm afraid not—eh! filthy creature, that smells all of pitch and tar!—Devil take you, you confounded toad—why did you see her before she was married?

Mrs For. Nay, why did we let him?—My husband will hang us—he'll think we brought them acquainted.

Mrs F. Come, faith, let us be gone—If my brother Foresight should find us with them, he'd think so, sure enough.

Mrs For. So he would—But then the leaving them together is as bad—and he's such a sly devil, he'll never miss an opportunity.

Mrs F. I don't care; I won't be seen in it.

Mrs For. Well, if you should, Mr Tattle, you'll have a world to answer for: remember, I wash my hands of it; I'm thoroughly innocent.

[*Exeunt Mrs* FRAIL *and Mrs* FORESIGHT.

Miss P. What makes them go away, Mr Tattle? What do they mean, do you know?

Tat. Yes, my dear, I think I can guess; but hang me if I know the reason of it.

Miss P. Come, must not we go too?

Tat. No, no; they don't mean that.

Miss P. No! what then? What shall you and I do together?

Tat. I must make love to you, pretty miss—will you let me make love to you?

Miss P. Yes, if you please.

Tat. Frank, egad, at least.—What a pox does Mrs Foresight mean by this civility? Is it to make a fool of me? or does she leave us together out of good morality, and do as she would be done by?—Egad, I'll understand it so. [*Aside.*

Miss P. Well, and how will you make love to me?—Come, I long to have you begin.—Must I make love too?—You must tell me how.

Tat. You must let me speak, miss; you must not speak first. I must ask you questions, and you must answer.

Miss P. What, is it like the catechism?——Come then, ask me.

Tat. D'ye think you can love me?

Miss P. Yes.

Tat. Pooh, pox! you must not say yes already. I sha'n't care a farthing for you then, in a twinkling.

Miss P. What must I say then?

Tat. Why, you must say no; or, believe not; or, you cann't tell.

Miss P. Why, must I tell a lie then?

Tat. Yes, if you'd be well-bred. All well-bred persons lie—Besides, you are a woman; you must never speak what you think: your words must contradict your thoughts; but your actions may contradict your words. So, when I ask you if you can love me, you must say no; but you must love me too. If I tell you you are handsome, you must deny it, and say I flatter you; but you must think yourself more charming than I speak you, and like me for the beauty which I say you have, as much as if I had it myself. If I ask you to kiss me, you must be angry; but you must not refuse me. If I ask you for more, you must be more angry, but more complying; and as soon as ever I make you say you'll cry out, you must be sure to hold your tongue.

Miss P. O Lord, I swear this is pure! I like it better than our old-fashion'd country way of speaking one's mind.—And must not you lie too?

Tat. Hum—Yes; but you must believe I speak truth.

Miss P. O Gemini! Well, I always had a great mind to tell lies—but they frighten'd me, and said it was a sin.

Tat. Well, my pretty creature, will you make me happy by giving me a kiss?

Miss P. No, indeed; I'm angry at you! [*Runs and kisses him.*

Tat. Hold, hold, that's pretty well—but you should not have given it me, but have suffer'd me to have taken it.

Miss P. Well, we'll do it again.

Tat. With all my heart—Now then, my little angel! [*Kisses her.*

Miss P. Pish!

Tat. That's right—Again, my charmer! [*Kisses again.*

Miss P. O fie! Nay, now I cann't abide you.

Tat. Admirable! That was as well as if you had been born and bred in Covent-Garden.—And won't you shew me, pretty miss, where your bedchamber is?

Miss P. No, indeed, won't I; but I'll run there, and hide myself from you behind the curtains.

Tat. I'll follow you.

Miss P. Ah, but I will hold the door with both hands, and be angry; and you shall push me down before you come in.

Tat. No, I'll come in first, and push you down afterwards.

Miss P. Will you? Then I'll be more angry, and more complying.

Tat. Then I'll make you cry out.

Miss P. O, but you sha'n't; for I'll hold my tongue.

Tat. O, my dear apt scholar!

Miss P. Well, now I'll run, and make more haste than you.

Tat. You shall not fly so fast as I'll pursue.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Nurse alone.

Nurse. Miss, Miss, Miss Prue!—Mercy on me, marry, and amen!—Why, what's become of the child?—Why, Miss, Miss Foresight!—Sure she has lock'd herself up in her chamber, and gone to sleep, or to prayers!—Miss, miss!—I hear her.—Come to your father, child.—Open the door; open the door, miss!—I hear you cry husht.—O Lord, who's there? [*Peeps.*] What's here to do?—O the father! a man with her!——Why, miss, I say!—God's my life, here's fine doings towards!—O Lord, we're all undone!—O you young harlotry!—[*Knocks.*]—Ods my life, won't you open the door?—I'll come in the back way.

[*Exit.*

Enter TATTLE *and Miss* PRUE.

Miss P. O Lord, she's coming; and she'll tell my father! What shall I do now?

Tat. Pox take her! If she had staid two minutes longer, I should have wish'd for her coming.

Miss P. O dear, what shall I say? Tell me, Mr Tattle, tell me a lie.

Tat. There's no occasion for a lie; I could never tell a lie to no purpose—But, since we have done nothing, we must say nothing, I think.——I hear her. I'll leave you together; and come off as you can.

[*Thrusts her in, and shuts the door.*

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *and* ANGELICA.

Ang. You cann't accuse me of inconstancy; I never told you that I loved you.

Val. But I can accuse you of uncertainty, for not telling me whether you did or not.

Ang. You mistake indifference for uncertainty; I never had concern enough to ask myself the question.

Scan. Nor good-nature enough to answer him that did ask you: I'll say that for you, madam.

Ang. What, are you setting up for good-nature?

Scan. Only for the affectation of it, as the women do for ill-nature.

Ang. Persuade your friend that it is all affectation.

Scan. I shall receive no benefit from the opinion; for I know no effectual difference between continued affectation and reality.

Tat. [*Coming up.*] Scandal, are you in private discourse? Any thing of secrecy?

[*Aside to* SCANDAL.

Scan. Yes; but I dare trust you. We were talking of Angelica's love to Valentine: you won't speak of it?

Tat. No, no, not a syllable—I know that's a secret, for it is whisper'd every where.

Scan. Ha, ha, ha!

Ang. What is, Mr Tattle? I heard you say something was whisper'd every where.

Scan. Your love for Valentine.

Ang. How!

Tat. No, madam; his love for your ladyship—Gad take me, I beg your pardon; for I never heard a word of your ladyship's passion till this instant.

Ang. My passion!—And who told you of my passion, pray, sir?

Scan. Why, is the devil in you? did not I tell it you for a secret?

Tat. Gadso; but I thought she might have been trusted with her own affairs.

Scan. Is that your discretion? trust a woman with herself?

Tat. You say true; I beg your pardon—I'll bring all off.—It was impossible, madam, for me to imagine that a person of your ladyship's wit and gallantry could have so long received the passionate addresses of the accomplish'd Valentine, and yet remain insensible: therefore you will pardon me, if, from a just weight of his merit, with your ladyship's good judgment, I form'd the balance of a reciprocal affection.

Val. O, the devil! What damn'd costive poet has given thee this lesson of fustian to get by rote?

Ang. I dare swear you wrong him; it is his own; and Mr Tattle only judges of the success of others from the effects of his own merit; for certainly Mr Tattle was never denied any thing in his life.

Tat. O Lord! yes, indeed, madam, several times.

Ang. I swear I don't think it is possible.

Tat. Yes, I vow and swear, I have. Lord, madam, I'm the most unfortunate man in the world, and the most cruelly used by the ladies.

Ang. Nay, now you're ungrateful.

Tat. No, I hope not.—It is as much ingratitude to own some favours, as to conceal others.

Val. There, now it is out.

Ang. I don't understand you now. I thought you had never ask'd any thing but what a lady might modestly grant, and you confess.

Scan. So, faith, your business is done here; now you may go brag somewhere else.

Tat. Brag! O Heavens! Why, did I name any body?

Ang. No; I suppose that is not in your power; but you would, if you could, no doubt on't.

Tat. Not in my power, madam? What! does your ladyship mean, that I have no woman's reputation in my power?

Scan. Oons! why, you won't own it, will you? [*Aside.*

Tat. Faith, madam, you are in the right; no more I have, as I hope to be saved; I never had it in my power to say any thing to a lady's prejudice in my life.—For, as I was telling you, madam, I have been the most unsuccessful creature living in things of that nature; and never had the good fortune to be trusted once with a lady's secret; not once.

Ang. No?

Val. Not once, I dare answer for him.

Scan. And I'll answer for him; for, I'm sure, if he had, he would have told me. I find, madam, you don't know Mr Tattle.

Tat. No, indeed, madam, you don't know me at all, I find; for sure, my intimate friends would have known——

Ang. Then, it seems, you would have told, if you had been trusted.

Tat. O, pox, Scandal, that was too far put! —Never have told particulars, madam. Perhaps I might have talk'd as of a third person, or have introduced an amour of my own in conversation, by way of novel; but never have explain'd particulars.

Ang. But whence comes the reputation of Mr Tattle's secrecy, if he was never trusted?

Scan. Why, thence it arises.—The thing is proverbially spoken; but may be applied to him.—As if we should say, in general terms, He only is secret who never was trusted; a satirical proverb upon our sex.—There is another upon yours; as, She is chaste who was never ask'd the question. —That's all.

Val. A couple of very civil proverbs, truly! It is hard to tell whether the lady or Mr Tattle be the more obliged to you; for you found her virtue upon the backwardness of the men, and his secrecy upon the mistrust of the women.

Tat. Gad, it's very true, madam; I think we are obliged to acquit ourselves—And for my part —But your ladyship is to speak first.

Ang. Am I? Well, I freely confess, I have resisted a great deal of temptation.

Tat. And, egad, I have given some temptation that has not been resisted.

Val. Good.

Ang. I cite Valentine here, to declare to the court how fruitless he has found his endeavours, and to confess all his solicitations and my denials.

Val. I am ready to plead, Not guilty, for you, and Guilty, for myself.

Scan. So—why, this is fair; here's demonstration, with a witness!

Tat. Well, my witnesses are not present: yet, I confess, I have had favours from persons; but as the favours are numberless, so the persons are nameless.

Scan. Pooh, this proves nothing.

Tat. No?—I can shew letters, lockets, pictures, and rings; and, if there be occasion for witnesses, I can summons the maids at the chocolate-houses, all the porters at Pall-Mall and Covent-Garden, the door-keepers at the play-house, the drawers at Locket's, Pontack's, the Rummer, Spring-Garden, my own landlady and valet-de-chambre; all who shall make oath, that I receive more letters than the secretary's office, and that I have more visor-masks to enquire for me than ever went to see the hermaphrodite, or the naked prince. And it is notorious, that, in a country church, once, an enquiry being made who I was, it was answer'd, I was the famous Tattle, who had ruin'd so many women.

Val. It was there, I suppose, you got the nickname of the Great Turk?

Tat. True; I was call'd Turk Tattle all over the parish.—The next Sunday, all the old women kept their daughters at home; and the parson had not half his congregation. He would have brought me into the spiritual court: but I was revenged upon him; for he had a handsome daughter, whom I initiated into the science. But I repented it afterwards; for it was talk'd of in town.—And a lady of quality, that shall be nameless, in a raging fit of jealousy, came down in her coach and six horses, and exposed herself upon my account.—Gad, I was sorry for it with all my heart.—You know whom I mean—you know where we raffled——

Scan. Mum, Tattle!

Val. 'Sdeath! are you not ashamed?

Ang. O barbarous! I never heard so insolent a piece of vanity!—Fie, Mr Tattle!—I'll swear I could not have believed it.——Is this your secrecy?

Tat. Gad so; the heat of my story carried me beyond my discretion, as the heat of the lady's passion hurried her beyond her reputation.—But I hope you don't know whom I mean; for there were a great many ladies raffled.—Pox on't, now could I bite off my tongue!

Scan. No, don't; for then you'll tell us no more. —Come, I'll recommend a song to you, upon the hint of my two proverbs; and I see one in the next room that will sing it. [*Goes to the door.*

Tat. For Heaven's sake, if you do guess, say nothing.—Gad, I'm very unfortunate.

Scan. Pray sing the first song in the last new play.

SONG.

A nymph and a swain to Apollo once pray'd;
The swain had been jilted, the nymph been betray'd:
Their intent was to try if his oracle knew
E'er a nymph that was chaste, or a swain that was true.

Apollo was mute, and had like t'have been pawed;
But sagely at length he this secret disclosed:
He alone won't betray in whom none will confide;
And the nymph may be chaste that has never been tried.

Enter Sir SAMPSON, *Mrs* FRAIL, *Miss* PRUE, *and Servant.*

Sir S. Is Ben come? Odso, my son Ben come? Odd, I'm glad on't.—Where is he? I long to see him.—Now, Mrs Frail, you shall see my son Ben.——Body o' me, he's the hopes of my family.—I ha'n't seen him these three years—I warrant he's grown—Call him in; bid him make haste. [*Exit Servant.*]—I'm ready to cry for joy.

Mrs F. Now, miss, you shall see your husband.

Miss P. Pish! He shall be none of my husband. [*Aside to Mrs* FRAIL.

Mrs F. Hush! Well, he sha'n't: leave that to me.—I'll beckon *Mr* Tattle to us.

Ang. Won't you stay and see your brother?

Val. We are the twin stars, and cannot shine in one sphere: when he rises, I must set. Besides, if I should stay, I don't know but my father, in good-nature, may press me to the immediate signing the deed of conveyance of my estate; and I'll defer it as long as I can.—Well, you'll come to a resolution?

Ang. I cannot. Resolution must come to me, or I shall never have one.

Scan. Come, Valentine, I'll go with you; I have something in my head to communicate to you. [*Exeunt* SCANDAL *and* VALENTINE.

Sir S. What! is my son Valentine gone? What! is he sneak'd off, and would not see his brother? There's an unnatural whelp! there's an ill-natured dog!——What! were you here too, madam, and could not keep him? Could neither love, nor duty, nor natural affection, oblige him?—Odsbud, madam, have no more to say to him; he is not worth your consideration. The rogue has not a drachm of generous love about him—all interest, all interest. He's an undone scoundrel, and courts your estate. Body o' me, he does not care a doit for your person.

Ang. I am pretty even with him, Sir Sampson; for, if ever I could have liked any thing in him, it should have been his estate too. But, since that's gone, the bait's off, and the naked hook appears.

Sir S. Odsbud, well spoken! And you are a wiser woman than I thought you were: for most young women now-a-days are to be tempted with a naked hook.

Ang. If I marry, Sir Sampson, I am for a good estate with any man, and for any man with a good estate: therefore, if I were obliged to make a choice, I declare I'd rather have you than your son.

Sir S. Faith and troth, you are a wise woman; and I'm glad to hear you say so. I was afraid you were in love with a reprobate. Odd, I was sorry for you with all my heart.—Hang him, mongrel! cast him off. You shall see the rogue shew himself, and make love to some desponding Cadua of four-score for sustenance.—Odd, I love to see a young spendthrift forced to cling to an old woman for support, like ivy round a dead oak—faith I do. I love to see them hug and cotton together, like down upon a thistle.

Enter BEN *and Servant.*

Ben. Where's father?

Serv. There, sir; his back's toward you. [*Exit.*

Sir S. My son Ben! Bless thee, my dear boy! Body o' me, thou art heartily welcome!

Ben. Thank you, father; and I'm glad to see you.

Sir S. Odsbud, and I'm glad to see thee. Kiss me, boy; kiss me again and again, dear Ben! [*Kisses him.*

Ben. So, so, enough, father.—Mess, I'd rather kiss these gentlewomen!

Sir S. And so thou shalt.—Mrs Angelica, my son Ben.

Ben. Forsooth, if you please. [*Salutes her.*]—Nay, mistress, I'm not for dropping anchor here; about ship, i' faith. [*Kisses Mrs* FRAIL.]—Nay, and you too, my little cock-boat—so—— [*Kisses Miss* PRUE.

Tat. Sir, you're welcome ashore.

Ben. Thank you, thank you, friend.

Sir S. Thou hast been many a weary league, Ben, since I saw thee.

Ben. Ey, ey; been! been far enough, and that be all.—Well, father, and how do all at home? How does brother Dick, and brother Val.?

Sir S. Dick! Body o' me, Dick has been dead these two years. I writ you word when you were at Leghorn.

Ben. Mess, that's true: marry, I had forgot. Dick is dead, as you say.—Well, and how——I have a many questions to ask you.—Well, you ben't married again, father, be you?

Sir S. No; I intend you shall marry, Ben. I would not marry for thy sake.

Ben. Nay, what does that signify?—An you marry again, why then I'll go to sea again; so there's one for t'other, and that be all.——Pray don't let me be your hindrance: e'en marry, a God's name, and the wind set that way. As for my part, mayhap I have no mind to marry.

Mrs F. That would be pity, such a handsome young gentleman.

Ben. Handsome! he, he, he! Nay, forsooth, an you be for joking, I'll joke with you; for I love my jest, an the ship were sinking, as we said at sea.—But I'll tell you why I don't much stand towards matrimony. I love to roam about from port to port, and from land to land: I could never abide to be port-bound, as we call it. Now a man that is married has, as it were, d'ye see, his feet in the bilboes, and mayhap mayn't get them out again when he would.

Sir S. Ben is a wag.

Ben. A man that is married, d'ye see, is no more like another man, than a galley-slave is like one of us free sailors: he is chain'd to an oar all his life; and mayhap forced to tug a leaky vessel into the bargain.

Sir S. A very wag! Ben is a very wag; only a little rough; he wants a little polishing.

Mrs F. Not at all; I like his humour mightily; it is plain and honest: I should like such a humour in a husband extremely.

Ben. Say'n you so, forsooth? Marry, and I should like such a handsome gentlewoman for a bed-fellow hugely. How say you, mistress? would you like going to sea? Mess, you're a tight vessel, and well rigg'd, an you were but as well mann'd.

Mrs F. I should not doubt that, if you were master of me.

Ben. But I'll tell you one thing; an you come to sea in a high wind or that, lady, you mayn't carry so much sail o' your head—Top and topgallant, by the mess!

Mrs F. No? Why so?

Ben. Why, an you do, you may run the risk to be overset; and then you'll carry your keels above water—he, he, he!

Ang. I swear, Mr Benjamin is the veriest wag in nature; an absolute sea-wit.

Sir S. Nay, Ben has parts; but, as I told you before, they want a little polishing. You must not take any thing ill, madam.

Ben. No; I hope the gentlewoman is not angry; I mean all in good part; for, if I give a jest, I'll take a jest; and so, forsooth, you may be as free with me.

Mrs F. I thank you, sir; I am not at all offended.—But methinks, Sir Sampson, you should leave him alone with his mistress.—Mr Tattle, we must not hinder lovers.

Tat. Well, miss, I have your promise.

[*Aside to Miss* PRUE.

Sir S. Body o' me, madam, you say true.——Look you, Ben, this is your mistress.——Come, miss, you must not be shame-faced; we'll leave you together.

Miss P. I cann't abide to be left alone. Mayn't my cousin stay with me?

Sir S. No, no.—Come, let's away.

Ben. Look you, father, mayhap the young woman mayn't take a liking to me.

Sir S. I warrant thee, boy.—Come, come, we'll be gone.—I'll venture that.

[*Exeunt Sir* SAMPSON, TATTLE, *&c.*

Ben. Come, mistress, will you please to sit down? For, an you stand a-stern a that'n, we shall never grapple together.—Come, I'll haul a chair; there, an you please to sit, I'll sit by you.

Miss P. You need not sit so near one; if you have any thing to say, I can hear you farther off; I an't deaf.

Ben. Why, that's true, as you say; nor I an't dumb; I can be heard as far as another. I'll heave off, to please you. [*Sits farther off.*] An we were a league asunder, I'd undertake to hold discourse with you, an 'twere not a main high wind indeed, and full in my teeth.—Look you, forsooth, I am, as it were, bound for the land of matrimony: 'tis a voyage, d'ye see, that was none of my seeking; I was commanded by father; and, if you like of it, mayhap I may steer into your harbour. How say you, mistress?——The short of the thing is, that, if you like me, and I like you, we may chance to swing in a hammock together.

Miss P. I don't know what to say to you, nor I don't care to speak with you at all.

Ben. No? I'm sorry for that. But, pray, why are you so scornful?

Miss P. As long as one must not speak one's mind, one had better not speak at all, I think; and, truly, I won't tell a lie for the matter.

Ben. Nay, you say true in that; it's but a folly to lie: for to speak one thing, and to think just the contrary way, is, as it were, to look one way, and to row another. Now, for my part, d'ye see, I'm for carrying things above board; I'm not for keeping any thing under hatches—so that, if you ben't as willing as I, say so, a God's name; there's no harm done. Mayhap you may be shame-faced; some maidens, thof they love a man well enough, yet they don't care to tell'n so to's face. If that's the case, why silence gives consent.

Miss P. But I'm sure it is not so; for I'll speak sooner than you should believe that; and I'll speak truth, though one should always tell a lie to a man; and I don't care, let my father do what he will, I'm too big to be whipt; so I'll tell you plainly, I don't like you, nor love you at all; nor never will, that's more. So there's your answer for you; and don't trouble me no more, you ugly thing.

Ben. Look you, young woman, you may learn to give good words, however. I spoke you fair, d'ye see, and civil. As for your love, or your liking, I don't value it of a rope's end; and mayhap I like you as little as you do me. What I said was in obedience to father. Gad, I fear a whipping no more than you do. But I tell you one thing; if you should give such language at sea, you'd have a cat-o-'nine-tails laid across your shoulders.——Flesh! who are you? You heard t'other handsome young woman speak civilly to me, of her own accord. Whatever you think of yourself, Gad, I don't think you are any more to compare to her, than a cann of small beer to a bowl of punch.

Miss P. Well, and there's a handsome gentleman, and a fine gentleman, and a sweet gentleman, that was here, that loves me, and I love him; and if he sees you speak to me any more, he'll thrash your jacket for you, he will, you great sea-calf.

Ben. What! do you mean that fair-weather spark that was here just now? Will he thrash my jacket?—Let'n—let'n. But an he comes near me, mayhap I may giv'n a salt eel for's supper, for all that.——What does father mean, to leave me alone, as soon as I come home, with such a dirty dowdy?——Sea-calf! I an't calf enough to lick your chalk'd face, you cheese-curd, you.——Marry thee! Oons, I'll marry a Lapland witch as soon, and live upon selling contrary winds and wreck'd vessels!

Miss P. I won't be call'd names, nor I won't be abused thus, so I won't. If I were a man, [*Cries.*] you durst not talk at this rate—no, you durst not, you stinking tar-barrel.

Enter Mrs FORESIGHT *and Mrs* FRAIL.

Mrs For. They have quarrell'd, just as we could wish.

Ben. Tar-barrel! Let your sweetheart there call me so, if he'll take your part, your Tom Essence, and I'll say something to him; Gad, I'll lace his musk doublet for him; I'll make him stink; he shall smell more like a weasel than a civet-cat afore I ha' done with 'en.

Mrs For. Bless me! what's the matter, miss? What, does she cry?—Mr Benjamin, what have you done to her?

Ben. Let her cry: the more she cries, the less she'll——She has been gathering foul weather in her mouth, and now it rains out at her eyes.

Mrs For. Come, miss, come along with me, and tell me, poor child.

Mrs F. Lord, what shall we do? There's my brother Foresight and Sir Sampson coming. Sister, do you take miss down into the parlour, and I'll carry Mr Benjamin into my chamber; for they must not know that they are fallen out.—Come, sir, will you venture yourself with me?

[*Looking kindly on him.*

Ben. Venture! Mess, and that I will, though it were to sea in a storm. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Sir SAMPSON *and* FORESIGHT.

Sir S. I left them together here.—What, are they gone?—Ben is a brisk boy; he has got her into a corner——father's own son, faith! he'll touzle her and mouzle her.—The rogue's sharp set coming from sea. If he should not stay for saying grace, old Foresight, but fall to without the help of a parson, ha? Odd, if he should, I could not be angry with him; 'twould be but like me, a chip of the old block.—Ha! thou'rt melancholic, old prognostication; as melancholic as if thou hadst spilt the salt, or pair'd thy nails on a Sunday. Come, cheer up, look about thee; look up, old star-gazer. Now is he poring upon the ground for a crook'd pin, or an old horse-nail, with the head towards him.

For. Sir Sampson, we'll have the wedding tomorrow morning.

Sir S. With all my heart.

For. At ten o'clock; punctually at ten.

Sir S. To a minute, to a second; thou shalt set thy watch; and the bridegroom shall observe its motions; they shall be married to a minute, go to bed to a minute; and when the alarum strikes, they shall keep time like the figures of St Dunstan's clock, and *consummatum est* shall ring all over the parish.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, Mr Scandal desires to speak with you upon earnest business.

For. I go to him.—Sir Sampson, your servant. [*Exit.*

Sir S. What's the matter, friend?

Serv. Sir, 'tis about your son Valentine; something has appear'd to him in a dream, that makes him prophesy.

Enter SCANDAL.

Scan. Sir Sampson, sad news!

For. Bless us!

Sir S. Why, what's the matter?

Scan. Cann't you guess at what ought to afflict you and him, and all of us, more than any thing else?

Sir S. Body o' me, I don't know any universal grievance, but a new tax, or the loss of the Canary fleet; unless popery should be landed in the west, or the French fleet were at anchor at Blackwall.

Scan. No? Undoubtedly Mr Foresight knew all this, and might have prevented it.

For. 'Tis no earthquake?

Scan. No, not yet; no whirlwind. But we don't know what it may come to; but it has had a consequence already that touches us all.

Sir S. Why, body o' me, out with it.

Scan. Something has appear'd to your son Valentine; he's gone to bed upon't, and very ill. He speaks little, yet he says he has a world to say; asks for his father and the wise Foresight; talks of Raymond Lully, and the ghost of Lilly. He has secrets to impart, I suppose, to you too. I can get nothing out of him but sighs. He desires he may see you in the morning; but would not be disturb'd to-night, because he has some business to do in a dream.

Sir S. Hoity toity! what have I to do with his dreams or his divination?—Body o' me, this is a trick to defer signing the conveyance. I warrant the devil will tell him, in a dream, that he must not part with his estate. But I'll bring him a parson to tell him that the devil's a liar; or, if that won't do, I'll bring a lawyer that shall out-lie the devil; and so I'll try whether my blackguard or his shall get the better of the day. [*Exit.*

Scan. Alas, Mr Foresight, I'm afraid all is not right. You are a wise man, and a conscientious man; a searcher into obscurity and futurity; and if you commit an error, it is with a great deal of consideration, and discretion, and caution.

For. Ah, good Mr Scandal!

Scan. Nay, nay, 'tis manifest; I do not flatter you.—But Sir Sampson is hasty, very hasty: I'm afraid he is not scrupulous enough, Mr Foresight. He has been wicked; and Heaven grant he may mean well in his affair with you.—But my mind gives me, these things cannot be wholly insignificant. You are wise, and should not be overreach'd; methinks you should not.

For. Alas, Mr Scandal, *Humanum est errare!*

Scan. You say true: man will err; mere man will err: but you are something more.—There have been wise men; but they were such as you,—men who consulted the stars, and were observers of omens. Solomon was wise; but how? By his judgment in astrology. So says Pineda, in his third book, and eighth chapter.

For. You are learn'd, Mr Scandal.

Scan. A trifler; but a lover of art.—And the wise men of the east owed their instructions to a star; which is rightly observed by Gregory the

Great, in favour of astrology. And Albertus Magnus makes it the most valuable science; because, says he, it teaches us to consider the causation of causes, in the causes of things.

For. I protest I honour you, Mr Scandal. I did not think you had been read in these matters. Few young men are inclined——

Scan. I thank my stars that have inclined me.—But I fear this marriage and making over the estate, this transferring of a rightful inheritance, will bring judgments upon us. I prophesy it; and I would not have the fate of Cassandra, not to be believed.—Valentine is disturb'd; what can be the cause of that? and Sir Sampson is hurried on by an unusual violence. I fear he does not act wholly from himself; and methinks he does not look as he used to do.

For. He was always of an impetuous nature.—But as to this marriage, I have consulted the stars; and all appearances are prosperous.

Scan. Come, come, Mr Foresight, let not the prospect of worldly lucre carry you beyond your judgment, nor against your conscience. You are not satisfied that you act justly.

For. How!

Scan. You are not satisfied, I say. I am loth to discourage you; but it is palpable that you are not satisfied.

For. How does it appear, Mr Scandal? I think I am very well satisfied.

Scan. Either you suffer yourself to deceive yourself, or you do not know yourself.

For. Pray explain yourself.

Scan. Do you sleep well o' nights?

For. Very well.

Scan. Are you certain? You do not look so.

For. I am in health, I think.

Scan. So was Valentine this morning, and looked just so.

For. How! Am I altered any way? I don't perceive it.

Scan. That may be; but your beard is longer than it was two hours ago.

For. Indeed? bless me!

Enter Mrs FORESIGHT.

Mrs For. Husband, will you go to bed? it's ten o'clock. Mr Scandal, your servant.

Scan. Pox on her, she has interrupted my design—but I must work her into the project. You keep early hours, madam.

Mrs For. Mr Foresight is punctual; we sit up after him.

For. My dear, pray lend me your glass, your little looking-glass.

Scan. Pray lend it him, madam—I'll tell you the reason—[*She gives him the glass:* SCANDAL *and she whisper*]—My passion for you is grown so violent, that I am no longer master of myself; I was interrupted in the morning, when you had charity enough to give me your attention; and I had hopes of finding another opportunity of explaining myself to you, but was disappointed all this day; and the uneasiness that has attended me ever since, brings me now hither at this unseasonable hour.

Mrs For. Was there ever such impudence, to make love to me before my husband's face? I'll swear I'll tell him.

Scan. Do; I'll die a martyr rather than disclaim my passion. But come a little farther this way, and I'll tell you what project I had to get him out of the way, that I might have an opportunity of waiting upon you.

[*Whisper.* FORESIGHT *looking in the glass.*

For. I do not see any revolution here.—Methinks I look with a serene and benign aspect,—pale, a little pale—but the roses of these cheeks have been gathered many years.—Ha, I do not like that sudden flushing—gone already!—Hem, hem, hem! faintish. My heart is pretty good, yet it beats: and my pulse, ha!—I have none—mercy on me!—hum!—Yes, here they are.—Gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop, gallop!—Hey, whither will they hurry me!—Now they're gone again—and now I'm faint again, and pale again, and, hem! and my, hem!—breath, and, hem!—grows short; hem! he, he, he, hem!

Scan. It takes: pursue it, in the name of love and pleasure.

Mrs For. How do you do, Mr Foresight?

For. Hum, not so well as I thought I was.—Lend me your hand.

Scan. Look you there now. Your lady says your sleep has been unquiet of late.

For. Very likely!

Mrs For. O, mighty restless! but I was afraid to tell him so. He has been subject to talking and starting.

Scan. And did not use to be so?

Mrs For. Never, never; till within these three nights, I cannot say that he has once broken my rest since we have been married.

For. I will go to bed.

Scan. Do so, Mr Foresight, and say your prayers—He looks better than he did.

Mrs For. Nurse, nurse!

For. Do you think so, Scandal?

Scan. Yes, yes; I hope this will be gone by morning; take it in time.

For. I hope so.

Enter Nurse.

Mrs For. Nurse, your master is not well; put him to bed.

Scan. I hope you will be able to see Valentine in the morning. You had best take a little diacodium and cowslip water, and lie upon your back; may be you may dream.

For. I thank you, Mr Scandal; I will. Nurse, let me have a watch-light, and lay *The Crumbs of Comfort* by me.

Nurse. Yes, sir. [*Exit.*

For. And—hem, hem! I am very faint.

Scan. No, no, you look much better.

For. Do I? And, d'ye hear—bring me—let me see—within a quarter of twelve—hem—he, hem!—just upon the turning of the tide, bring

me the urinal. And I hope, neither the lord of my ascendant, nor the moon, will be combust; and then I may do well.

Scan. I hope so—Leave that to me; I will erect a scheme, and I hope I shall find both Sol and Venus in the sixth house.

For. I thank you, Mr Scandal; indeed that would be a great comfort to me. Hem, hem! good night. [*Exit.*

Scan. Good night, good Mr Foresight. And I hope Mars and Venus will be in conjunction, while your wife and I are together.

Mrs For. Well; and what use do you hope to make of this project? You don't think that you are ever like to succeed in your design upon me?

Scan. Yes, faith, I do; I have a better opinion both of you and myself, than to despair.

Mrs For. Did you ever hear such a toad?—Hark'ye, devil; do you think any woman honest?

Scan. Yes, several, very honest—they'll cheat a little at cards sometimes; but that's nothing.

Mrs For. Pshaw! but virtuous, I mean?

Scan. Yes, faith, I believe some women are virtuous too; but 'tis as I believe some men are valiant, through fear—For why should a man court danger, or a woman shun pleasure?

Mrs. For. O monstrous! What are conscience and honour?

Scan. Why, honour is a public enemy, and conscience a domestic thief; and he that would secure his pleasure, must pay a tribute to one, and go halves with t'other. As for honour, that you have secured, for you have purchased a perpetual opportunity for pleasure.

Mrs For. An opportunity for pleasure?

Scan. Ay, your husband; an husband is an opportunity for pleasure. So you have taken care of honour, and 'tis the least I can do to take care of conscience.

Mrs For. And so you think we are free for one another?

Scan. Yes, faith, I think so; I love to speak my mind.

Mrs For. Why then I'll speak my mind. Now, as to this affair between you and me. Here you make love to me; why, I'll confess it does not displease me. Your person is well enough, and your understanding is not amiss.

Scan. I have no great opinion of myself, but I think I am neither deformed nor a fool.

Mrs For. But you have a villainous character; you are a libertine in speech, as well as practice.

Scan. Come, I know what you would say; you think it more dangerous to be seen in conversation with me, than to allow some other men the last favour. You mistake; the liberty I take in talking is purely affected, for the service of your sex. He that first cries out stop thief, is often he that stole the treasure. I am a juggler, that acts by confederacy, and, if you please, we'll put a trick upon the world.

Mrs For. Ay; but you are such an universal juggler, that I'm afraid you have a great many confederates.

Scan. Faith, I'm sound.

Mrs For. O fie!—I'll swear you're impudent.

Scan. I'll swear you're handsome.

Mrs For. Pish! you'd tell me so, though you did not think so.

Scan. And you'd think so, though I did not tell you so; and now I think we know one another pretty well.

Mrs For. O Lord! who's here?

Enter Mrs FRAIL *and* BEN.

Ben. Mess, I love to speak my mind—Father has nothing to do with me.—Nay, I cann't say that neither; he has something to do with me: but what does that signify? If so be that I ben't minded to be steer'd by him, 'tis as thof he should strive against wind and tide.

Mrs F. Ay, but, my dear, we must keep it secret till the estate be settled; for, you know, marrying without an estate is like sailing in a ship without ballast.

Ben. He, he, he! why, that's true; just so, for all the world; it is as like as two cable-ropes.

Mrs F. And though I have a good portion, you know one would not venture all in one bottom.

Ben. Why, that's true again; for mayhap one bottom may spring a leak. You have hit it indeed; mess, you've nick'd the channel.

Mrs F. Well, but if you should forsake me after all, you'd break my heart.

Ben. Break your heart! I'd rather the Marygold should break her cable in a storm, as well as I love her. Flesh! you don't think I'm false-hearted, like a landman? A sailor would be honest, thof mayhap he has never a penny of money in his pocket. Mayhap I may not have so fair a face as a citizen or a courtier; but, for all that, I've as good blood in my veins, and a heart as sound as a biscuit.

Mrs F. And will you love me always?

Ben. Nay, an I love once, I'll stick like pitch, I'll tell you that.—Come, I'll sing you a song of a sailor.

Mrs F. Hold! there's my sister; I'll call her to hear it.

Mrs For. Well, I won't go to bed to my husband to-night, because I'll retire to my own chamber, and think of what you have said.

Scan. Well, you'll give me leave to wait upon you to your chamber-door, and leave you my last instructions?

Mrs For. Hold! here's my sister coming towards us.

Mrs F. If it won't interrupt you, Mr Ben will entertain you with a song.

Ben. The song was made upon one of our ship's-crew's wife; our boatswain made the song; mayhap you know her, sir? Before she married, she was call'd Buxom Joan of Deptford.

Scan. I have heard of her. [BEN *sings.*

BALLAD.

A soldier and a sailor,
A tinker and a tailor,
Had once a doubtful strife, sir,
To make a maid a wife, sir,
Whose name was Buxom Joan.
For now the time was ended,
When she no more intended
To lick her lips at men, sir,
And gnaw the sheets in vain, sir,
And lie o' nights alone.

The soldier swore like thunder,
He loved her more than plunder;
And shew'd her many a scar, sir,
That he had brought from far, sir,
With fighting for her sake.
The tailor thought to please her,
With offering her his measure;
The tinker too, with mettle,
Said he could mend her kettle,
And stop up every leak.

But while these three were prating,
The sailor slily waiting,
Thought if it came about, sir,
That they should all fall out, sir,
He then might play his part:
And just e'en as he meant, sir,
To loggerheads they went, sir;
And then he let fly at her,
A shot 'twixt wind and water,
That won the fair maid's heart.

Ben. If some of our crew that came to see me are not gone, you shall see that we sailors can dance sometimes, as well as other folks. [*Whistles.*] —I warrant that brings them, an they be within hearing.

Enter Seamen.

Oh, here they be! and fiddles along with them. Come, my lads, let's have a round, and I'll make one. [*Dance.*] We're merry folks, we sailors; we ha'n't much to care for. Thus we live at sea; eat biscuit, and drink flip; put on a clean shirt once a quarter; come home, and lie with our landladies once a-year; get rid of a little money, and then put off with the next fair wind.—How d'ye like us?

Mrs F. O, you are the happiest, merriest men alive!

Mrs For. We're beholden to Mr Benjamin for this entertainment.—I believe it is late.

Ben. Why, forsooth, an you think so, you had best go to bed. For my part, I mean to toss a cann, and remember my sweetheart, before I turn in; mayhap I may dream of her.

Mrs For. Mr Scandal, you had best go to bed, and dream too.

Scan. Why, faith, I have a good lively imagination, and can dream as much to the purpose as another, if I set about it. But dreaming is the poor retreat of a lazy, hopeless, and imperfect lover: 'tis the last glimpse of love to worn-out sinners, and the faint dawning of a bliss to wishing girls and growing boys.—

There's nought but willing waking love that can
Make bless'd the ripen'd maid and finish'd man.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—VALENTINE'S *Lodgings.*

Enter SCANDAL *and* JEREMY.

Scan. Well, is your master ready? Does he look madly, and talk madly?

Jer. Yes, sir; you need make no great doubt of that: he that was so near turning poet yesterday morning, cann't be much to seek in playing the madman to-day.

Scan. Would he have Angelica acquainted with the design?

Jer. No, sir, not yet.—He has a mind to try whether his playing the madman won't make her play the fool, and fall in love with him; or at least own that she has loved him all this while, and concealed it.

Scan. I saw her take coach just now with her maid; and think I heard her bid the coachman drive hither.

Jer. Like enough, sir; for I told her maid this morning, my master was run stark mad, only for love of her mistress. I hear a coach stop: if it should be she, sir, I believe he would not see her, till he hears how she takes it.

Scan. Well, I'll try her—'tis she; here she comes.

Enter ANGELICA.

Ang. Mr Scandal, I suppose you don't think it a novelty, to see a woman visit a man at his own lodgings in a morning?

Scan. Not upon a kind occasion, madam. But, when a lady comes tyrannically, to insult a ruined lover, and make manifest the cruel triumphs of her beauty, the barbarity of it something surprises me.

Ang. I don't like raillery from a serious face. Pray tell me what is the matter?

Jer. No strange matter, madam; my master's mad, that's all. I suppose your ladyship has thought him so a great while.

Ang. How d'ye mean, mad?

Jer. Why, faith, madam, he's mad for want of his wits, just as he was poor for want of money. His head is e'en as light as his pockets; and any

body that has a mind to a bad bargain, cann't do better than to beg him for his estate.

Ang. If you speak truth, your endeavouring at wit is very unseasonable.——

Scan. She's concern'd, and loves him! [*Aside.*

Ang. Mr Scandal, you cann't think me guilty of so much inhumanity, as not to be concern'd for a man I must own myself obliged to.—Pray tell me the truth.

Scan. Faith, madam, I wish telling a lie would mend the matter. But this is no new effect of an unsuccessful passion.

Ang. [*Aside.*] I know not what to think! Yet I should be vex'd to have a trick put upon me!—May I not see him?

Scan. I'm afraid the physician is not willing you should see him yet.—Jeremy, go in and enquire. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Ang. Ha! I saw him wink and smile! I fancy a trick. I'll try. [*Aside.*] I would disguise to all the world, sir, a failing which I must own to you: I fear my happiness depends upon the recovery of Valentine. Therefore I conjure you, as you are his friend, and as you have compassion on one fearful of affliction, to tell me what I am to hope for—I cannot speak—But you may tell me, for you know what I would ask.

Scan. So, this is pretty plain! Be not too much concern'd, madam; I hope his condition is not desperate. An acknowledgment of love from you, perhaps, may work a cure, as the fear of your aversion occasioned his distemper.

Ang. Say you so? nay, then I'm convinced: and if I don't play trick for trick, may I never taste the pleasure of revenge! [*Aside.*] Acknowledgment of love! I find you have mistaken my compassion, and think me guilty of a weakness I am a stranger to. But I have too much sincerity to deceive you, and too much charity to suffer him to be deluded with vain hopes. Good-nature and humanity oblige me to be concerned for him; but to love, is neither in my power nor inclination; and if he cann't be cured without I suck the poison from his wounds, I'm afraid he won't recover his senses till I lose mine.

Scan. Hey, brave woman i'faith!—Won't you see him then, if he desires it?

Ang. What signifies a madman's desires? besides, 'twould make me uneasy; if I don't see him, perhaps my concern for him may lessen; if I forget him, 'tis no more than he has done by himself; and now the surprise is over, methinks I'm not half so sorry as I was.

Scan. So, faith, good-nature works apace; you were confessing just now an obligation to his love.

Ang. But I have considered that passions are unreasonable and involuntary. If he loves, he cann't help it; and if I don't love, I cannot help it; no more than he can help his being a man, or I my being a woman: or no more than I can help my want of inclination to stay longer here. [*Exit.*

Scan. Humph!—An admirable composition, faith, this same womankind!

Enter JEREMY.

Jer. What, is she gone, sir?

Scan. Gone? why she was never here, nor any where else: nor I don't know her if I see her, nor you neither.

Jer. Good lack! what's the matter now? are any more of us to be mad? Why, sir, my master longs to see her; and is almost mad in good earnest with the joyful news of her being here.

Scan. We are all under a mistake.—Ask no questions, for I cann't resolve you; but I'll inform your master. In the mean time, if our project succeed no better with his father than it does with his mistress, he may descend from his exaltation of madness into the road of common sense, and be content only to be made a fool with other reasonable people. I hear Sir Sampson. You know your cue? I'll to your master. [*Exit.*

Enter Sir SAMPSON *and* BUCKRAM.

Sir S. D'ye see, Mr Buckram, here's the paper signed with his own hand.

Buck. Good, sir; and the conveyance is ready drawn in this box, if he be ready to sign and seal.

Sir S. Ready! body o' me, he must be ready: his sham sickness sha'n't excuse him.—O, here's his scoundrel! Sirrah, where's your master?

Jer. Ah, sir, he's quite gone!

Sir S. Gone! what, he's not dead?

Jer. No, sir, not dead.

Sir S. What, is he gone out of town? run away? ha! has he trick'd me? Speak, varlet!

Jer. No, no, sir; he's safe enough, sir, an he were but as sound, poor gentleman! He is indeed here, sir, and not here, sir.

Sir S. Hey-day! rascal, do you banter me? sirrah, d'ye banter me?—Speak, sirrah; where is he? for I will find him.

Jer. Would you could, sir; for he has lost himself.—Indeed, sir, I have almost broke my heart about him—I cann't refrain tears when I think on him, sir: I'm as melancholy for him as a passing-bell, sir; or a horse in a pond.

Sir S. A pox confound your similitudes, sir!—Speak to be understood; and tell me in plain terms what the matter is with him, or I'll crack your fool's skull.

Jer. Ah, you've hit it, sir! that's the matter with him, sir; his skull's crack'd, poor gentleman! he's stark mad, sir.

Sir S. Mad!

Buck. What, is he *non compos?*

Jer. Quite *non compos*, sir.

Buck. Why, then, all's obliterated, Sir Sampson. If he be *non compos mentis*, his act and deed will be of no effect; it is not good in law.

Sir S. Oons, I won't believe it; let me see him, sir.—Mad! I'll make him find his senses.

Jer. Mr Scandal is with him, sir; I'll knock at the door.

[*Goes to the Scene, which opens, and discovers* VALENTINE *and* SCANDAL. VALENTINE *upon a couch, disorderly dressed.*

Sir S. How now? what's here to do?

Val. Ha! who's that? [*Starting.*

Scan. For Heaven's sake, softly, sir, and gently; don't provoke him.

Val. Answer me, who's that? and that?

Sir S. Gads-bobs, does he not know? Is he mischievous? I'll speak gently.—Val, Val, dost thou not know me, boy? not know thy own father, Val? I am thy own father, and this honest Brief Buckram, the lawyer

Val. It may be so—I did not know you—The world is full—There are people that we do know, and people that we do not know; and yet the sun shines upon all alike.—There are fathers that have many children; and there are children that have many fathers—'tis strange!—But I am Honesty, and come to give the world the lie.

Sir S. Body o' me, I know not what to say to him!

Val. Why does that lawyer wear black? Does he carry his conscience without-side?—Lawyer, what art thou? Dost thou know me?

Buck. O Lord, what must I say?—Yes, sir.

Val. Thou liest; for I am Honesty.—'Tis hard I cannot get a livelihood amongst you. I have been sworn out of Westminster-Hall the first day of every term—let me see—no matter how long. —But I'll tell thee one thing: It is a question that would puzzle an arithmetician, if I should ask him, Whether the Bible saves more souls in Westminster Abbey, or damns more in Westminster Hall?—For my part, I am Honesty, and cann't tell; I have very few acquaintance.

Sir S. Body o' me, he talks sensibly in his madness—Has he no intervals?

Jer. Very short, sir.

Buck. Sir, I can do no service while he's in this condition. Here's your paper, sir.—He may do me a mischief if I stay.—The conveyance is ready, sir, if he recover his senses. [*Exit.*

Sir S. Hold, hold, don't you go yet.

Scan. You'd better let him go, sir, and send for him if there be occasion; for I fancy his presence provokes him more.

Val. Is the lawyer gone? 'Tis well; then we may drink about without going together by the ears.—Heigho! what o'clock is it?—My father here!—Your blessing, sir.

Sir S. He recovers!—Bless thee, Val! How dost thou do, boy?

Val. Thank you, sir, pretty well. I have been a little out of order.—Won't you please to sit, sir?

Sir S. Ay, boy. Come, thou shalt sit down by me.

Val. Sir, 'tis my duty to wait.

Sir S. No, no; come, come, sit thee down, honest Val. How dost thou do? Let me feel thy pulse. —Oh, pretty well now, Val.—Body o' me, I was sorry to see thee indisposed: but I'm glad thou art better, honest Val.

Val. I thank you, sir.

Scan. Miracle! The monster grows loving! [*Aside.*

Sir S. Let me feel thy hand again, Val. It does not shake.—I believe thou canst write, Val; ha, boy? Thou canst write thy name, Val?—Jeremy, step and overtake Mr Buckram: bid him make haste back with the conveyance.—Quick! [*Exit* JEREMY.

Scan. That ever I should suspect such a heathen of any remorse! [*Aside.*

Sir S. Dost thou know this paper, Val?—I know thou'rt honest, and will perform articles. [*Shews him the paper, but holds it out of his reach.*

Val. Pray let me see it, sir; you hold it so far off, that I cann't tell whether I know it or no.

Sir S. See it, boy! Ay, ay; why, thou dost see it—'tis thy own hand, Vally.—Why, let me see, I can read it as plain as can be. Look you here—[*Reads.*]—'The condition of this obligation'—Look you, as plain as can be, so it begins. And then, at the bottom, 'As witness my hand, VALENTINE LEGEND,' in great letters. Why, 'tis as plain as the nose on one's face.—What, are my eyes better than thine?—I believe I can read it farther off yet—Let me see. [*Stretches his arm as far as he can.*

Val. Will you please to let me hold it, sir?

Sir S. Let thee hold it, say'st thou? Ay, with all my heart. What matter is it who holds it? What need any body hold it?—I'll put it in my pocket, Val, and then nobody need hold it. [*Puts the paper in his pocket.*]—There, Val;—it's safe enough, boy. But thou shalt have it as soon as thou hast set thy hand to another paper, little Val.

Enter JEREMY *and* BUCKRAM.

Val. What, is my bad genius here again?—O no, 'tis the lawyer, with an itching palm; and he's come to be scratch'd.——My nails are not long enough.——Let me have a pair of red-hot tongs quickly, quickly; and you shall see me act St Dunstan, and lead the devil by the nose.

Buck. O Lord, let me be gone! I'll not venture myself with a madman. [*Runs out.*

Val. Ha, ha, ha! you need not run so fast. Honesty will not overtake you.——Ha, ha, ha! the rogue found me out to be *in forma pauperis* presently.

Sir S. Oons, what a vexation is here! I know not what to do or say, or which way to go.

Val. Who's that that's out of his way? I am Honesty, and can set him right.—Hark'e, friend, the straight road is the worst way you can go.—He that follows his nose always will very often be led into a stink. *Probatum est.*—But what are you for? Religion or politics? There's a couple of topics for you, no more like one another than oil and vinegar: and yet these two, beaten together by a state-cook, make sauce for the whole nation.

Sir S. What the devil had I to do ever to beget sons? Why did I ever marry?

Val. Because thou wert a monster, old boy. The two greatest monsters in the world are a man and a woman. What's thy opinion?

Sir S. Why, my opinion is, that these two monsters, joined together, make yet a greater; that's a man and his wife.

Val. Aha, old Truepenny! say'st thou so? Thou hast nick'd it. But it is wonderful strange, Jeremy.

Jer. What is it, sir?

Val. That grey hairs should cover a green head, and I make a fool of my father.—What's here? *Erra Pater*, or a bearded sibyl?—If Prophecy comes, Honesty must give place.

[*Exeunt* VALENTINE *and* JEREMY.

Enter FORESIGHT, *Mrs* FORESIGHT, *and Mrs* FRAIL.

For. What says he? What did he prophesy, ha, Sir Sampson?—Bless us! who are we?

Sir S. Are we! A pox on your prognostications!—Why, we are fools as we used to be.—Oons, that you could not foresee that the moon would predominate, and my son be mad!—Where's your oppositions, your trines, and your quadrates?—What did your Cardan and your Ptolemy tell you? Your Messahalah and your Longomontanus? Your harmony of chiromancy with astrology?—Ah, pox on't! that I, who know the world, and men and manners, who don't believe a syllable in the sky and stars, and sun and almanacks, and trash, should be directed by a dreamer, an omen-hunter, and defer business, in expectation of a lucky hour! when, body o' me, there was never a lucky hour after the first opportunity! [*Exit.*

For. Ah, Sir Sampson, Heaven help your head!—This is none of your lucky hour—*Nemo omnibus horis sapit!*—What, is he gone, and in contempt of science?—Ill stars and unconvertible ignorance attend him!

Scan. You must excuse his passion, Mr Foresight; for he has been heartily vex'd. His son is *non compos mentis*, and thereby incapable of making any conveyance in law; so that all his measures are disappointed.

For. Ha! say you so?

Mrs F. What, has my sea-lover lost his anchor of hope then? [*Aside to Mrs* FORESIGHT.

Mrs For. O sister, what will you do with him?

Mrs F. Do with him! Send him to sea again in the next foul weather.—He's used to an inconstant element, and won't be surprised to see the tide turn'd.

For. Wherein was I mistaken, not to foresee this? [*Considers.*

Scan. Madam, you and I can tell him something else that he did not foresee, and more particularly relating to his own fortune.

[*Aside to Mrs* FORESIGHT.

Mrs For. What do you mean? I don't understand you.

Scan. Hush! softly!—The pleasures of last night, my dear; too considerable to be forgot so soon.

Mrs For. Last night! And what would your impudence infer from last night? Last night was like the night before, I think.

Scan. 'Sdeath! do you make no difference between me and your husband?

Mrs F. Not much—He's superstitious, and you are mad, in my opinion.

Scan. You make me mad.—You are not serious?—Pray recollect yourself.

Mrs For. O yes, now I remember, you were very impertinent and impudent, and would have come to bed to me.

Scan. And did not?

Mrs For. Did not! With what face can you ask the question?

Scan. This I have heard of before, but never believed. I have been told, she had that admirable quality of forgetting to a man's face in the morning that she had lain with him all night; and denying that she had done favours, with more impudence than she could grant them.—[*Aside.*]—Madam, I'm your humble servant, and honour you.—You look pretty well, Mr Foresight. How did you rest last night?

For. Truly, Mr Scandal, I was so taken up with broken dreams and distracted visions, that I remember little.

Scan. 'Twas a very forgetting night.—But would you not talk with Valentine? Perhaps you may understand him; I am apt to believe, there is something mysterious in his discourse, and sometimes rather think him inspired than mad.

For. You speak with singular good judgment, Mr Scandal, truly.—I am inclining to your Turkish opinion in this matter, and do reverence a man whom the vulgar think mad. Let us go to him.

Mrs F. Sister, do you go with them; I'll find out my lover, and give him his discharge, and come to you.—[*Exeunt* SCANDAL, *Mr and Mrs* FORESIGHT.] On my conscience, here he comes.

Enter BEN.

Ben. All mad, I think.—Flesh, I believe all the *Calentures* of the sea are come ashore, for my part!

Mrs F. Mr Benjamin in choler!

Ben. No, I'm pleased well enough, now I have found you.—Mess, I have had such a hurricane on your account yonder!

Mrs F. My account?—Pray what's the matter?

Ben. Why, father came, and found me squabbling with yon chitty-faced thing, as he would have me marry—so he asked what was the matter?—He asked in a surly sort of a way.—It seems brother Val. is gone mad, and so that put'n into a passion; but what, did I know that? what's that to me?—So he asked in a surly sort of manner—and, God, I answered 'en as surlily. What thof he be my father, I an't bound apprentice to 'en: so, faith I told'n in plain terms, if I were minded to marry, I'd marry to please myself, not him; and for the young woman that he provided for me, I thought it more fitting for her to learn her sampler, and make dirt-pies, than to look after a husband; for my part, I was none of her man—I had another voyage to make, let him take it as he will.

Mrs F. So then, you intend to go to sea again?

Ben. Nay, nay, my mind ran upon you, but I would not tell him so much.—So he said, he'd make my heart ache; and if so be that he could get a woman to his mind, he'd marry himself.—Gad, says I, an you play the fool and marry at these years, there's more danger of your head's aching than my heart!—He was woundy angry when I giv'n that wipe—he hadn't a word to say; and so I left'n and the green girl together; mayhap the bee may bite, and he'll marry her himself—with all my heart!

Mrs F. And were you this undutiful and graceless wretch to your father?

Ben. Then why was he graceless first?—If I am undutiful and graceless, why did he beget me so? I did not beget myself.

Mrs F. O impiety! how have I been mistaken! What an inhuman merciless creature have I set my heart upon? O, I am happy to have discovered the shelves and quicksands that lurk beneath that faithless smiling face!

Ben. Hey-toss! what's the matter now? why you ben't angry, be you?

Mrs F. O see me no more—for thou wert born among rocks, suckled by whales, cradled in a tempest, and whistled to by winds; and thou art come forth with fins and scales, and three rows of teeth, a most outrageous fish of prey.

Ben. O Lord, O Lord, she's mad, poor young woman! Love has turned her senses; her brain is quite overset.—Well-a-day, how shall I do to set her to rights?

Mrs F. No, no, I am not mad, monster; I am wise enough to find you out.—Hadst thou the impudence to aspire at being a husband, with that stubborn and disobedient temper?—You, that know not how to submit to a father, presume to have a sufficient stock of duty to undergo a wife! I should have been finely fobbed indeed, very finely fobbed!

Ben. Hark'e, forsooth! if so be that you are in your right senses, d'ye see, for aught as I perceive, I'm like to be finely fobbed—if I have got anger here upon your account, and you are tacked about already!—What d'ye mean, after all your fair speeches, and stroking my cheeks, and kissing and hugging, what, would you shear off so, would you, and leave me aground?

Mrs F. No, I'll leave you adrift, and go which way you will.

Ben. What, are you false-hearted then?

Mrs F. Only the wind's changed.

Ben. More shame for you!—The wind's changed!—It is an ill wind that blows nobody good.—Mayhap I have a good riddance on you, if these be your tricks.——What, did you mean all this while to make a fool of me?

Mrs F. Any fool, but a husband.

Ben. Husband! Gad, I would not be your husband, if you would have me, now I know your mind; thof you had your weight in gold and jewels, and thof I loved you never so well.

Mrs F. Why, canst thou love, porpus?

Ben. No matter what I can do; don't call names.—I don't love you so well as to bear that, whatever I did.—I'm glad you shew yourself, mistress:—let them marry you as don't know you.—Gad, I know you too well, by sad experience; I believe he that marries you will go to sea in a henpecked frigate.—I believe that, young woman! and mayhap may come to an anchor at Cuckold's Point; so there's a dash for you, take it as you will; mayhap you may hollow after me when I won't come to. [*Exit.*

Mrs F. Ha, ha, ha! no doubt on't, [*Sings.*]—"*My true love is gone to sea.*"—[*Enter Mrs* FORESIGHT.] O sister, had you come a minute sooner, you would have seen the resolution of a lover.—Honest Tar and I are parted;—and with the same indifference that we met.—On my life, I am half vexed at the insensibility of a brute I despised.

Mrs For. What then, he bore it most heroically?

Mrs F. Most tyrannically—for you see he has got the start of me; and I the poor forsaken maid am left complaining on the shore. But I'll tell you a hint that he has given me. Sir Sampson is enraged, and talks desperately of committing matrimony himself. If he has a mind to throw himself away, he cann't do it more effectually than upon me, if we could bring it about.

Mrs For. O hang him, old fox! he's too cunning; besides, he hates both you and me. But I have a project in my head for you, and I have gone a good way towards it. I have almost made a bargain with Jeremy, Valentine's man, to sell his master to us.

Mrs F. Sell him! how?

Mrs For. Valentine raves upon Angelica, and took me for her; and Jeremy says will take any body for her that he imposes on him. Now I have promised him mountains, if in one of his mad fits he will bring you to him in her stead, and get you married together, and put to bed together—and after consummation, girl, there's no revoking. And if he should recover his senses, he'll be glad at least to make you a good settlement.—Here they come; stand a side a little, and tell me how you like the design.

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, FORESIGHT, *and* JEREMY.

Scan. And have you given your master a hint of their plot upon him? [*To* JEREMY.

Jer. Yes, sir; he says he'll favour it, and mistake her for Angelica.

Scan. It may make us sport.

For. Mercy on us!

Val. Husht—interrupt me not—I'll whisper prediction to thee, and thou shalt prophesy.—I am Honesty, and can teach thy tongue a new trick.—I have told thee what's past—Now I'll tell what's to come!—Dost thou know what will happen to-morrow?—Answer me not, for I will tell thee. To-morrow knaves will thrive

through craft, and fools through fortune; and Honesty will go as it did, frost-nipt in a summer suit. Ask me questions concerning to-morrow.

Scan. Ask him, Mr Foresight.

For. Pray what will be done at court?

Val. Scandal will tell you—I am Honesty; I never come there.

For. In the city?

Val. Oh, prayers will be said in empty churches, at the usual hours. Yet you will see such zealous faces behind counters, as if religion were to be sold in every shop. Oh! things will go methodically in the city. The clocks will strike twelve at noon, and the horned herd buz in the Exchange at two. Husbands and wives will drive distinct trades; and care and pleasure separately occupy the family. Coffee-houses will be full of smoke and stratagem. And the cropt 'prentice, that sweeps his master's shop in the morning, may, ten to one, dirty his sheets before night. But there are two things that you will see very strange; which are, wanton wives with their legs at liberty, and tame cuckolds with chains about their necks.—But hold, I must examine you before I go further; you look suspiciously. Are you a husband?

For. I am married.

Val. Poor creature! Is your wife of Covent-garden parish?

For. No; St Martin in the Fields.

Val. Alas, poor man! his eyes are sunk, and his hands shrivelled; his legs dwindled, and his back bowed. Pray, pray for a metamorphosis.—Change thy shape, and shake off age; get thee Medea's kettle, and be boiled anew; come forth, with labouring, callous hands, a chine of steel, and Atlas' shoulders. Let Taliacotius trim the calves of twenty chairmen, and make thee pedestals to stand erect upon; and look matrimony in the face. Ha, ha, ha! that a man should have a stomach to a wedding supper, when the pigeons ought rather to be laid to his feet! Ha, ha, ha!

For. His frenzy is very high now, Mr Scandal.

Scan. I believe it is a spring tide.

For. Very likely truly; you understand these matters.—Mr Scandal, I shall be very glad to confer with you about these things which he has uttered.—His sayings are very mysterious and hieroglyphical.

Val. Oh, why would Angelica be absent from my eyes so long?

Jer. She's here, sir.

Mrs For. Now, sister.

Mrs F. O Lord, what must I say?

Scan. Humour him, madam, by all means.

Val. Where is she? Oh, I see her!—She comes like riches, health, and liberty, at once, to a despairing, starving, and abandoned wretch.—O welcome, welcome!

Mrs F. How d'ye, sir? can I serve you?

Val. Hark'e—I have a secret to tell you—Endymion and the moon shall meet us upon Mount Latmos, and we'll be married in the dead of night.—But say not a word.—Hymen shall put his torch into a dark lantern, that it may be secret; and Juno shall give her peacock poppy water, that he may fold his ogling tail, and Argus's hundred eyes be shut, ha? Nobody shall know but Jeremy.

Mrs F. No, no, we'll keep it secret; it shall be done presently.

Val. The sooner the better—Jeremy, come hither——closer—that none may overhear us. Jeremy, I can tell you news. Angelica is turned nun; and I am turned friar: and yet we'll marry one another in spite of the pope. Give me a cowl and beads, that I may play my part—for she'll meet me two hours hence in black and white, and a long veil to cover the project; and we won't see one another's faces, till we have done something to be ashamed of—and then we'll blush once for all.

Enter TATTLE *and* ANGELICA.

Jer. I'll take care, and——

Val. Whisper.

Ang. Nay, Mr Tattle, if you make love to me, you spoil my design; for I intend to make you my confidant.

Scan. How's this? Tattle making love to Angelica!

Tat. But, madam, to throw away your person; such a person, and such a fortune, on a madman!

Ang. I never loved him till he was mad; but don't tell any body so.

Tat. Tell, madam? alas, you don't know me. I have much ado to tell your ladyship how long I have been in love with you: but, encouraged by the impossibility of Valentine's making any more addresses to you, I have ventured to declare the very inmost passion of my heart. Oh, madam, look upon us both. There you see the ruins of a poor decayed creature! Here, a complete lively figure, with youth and health, and all his five senses in perfection, madam; and to all this, the most passionate lover—

Ang. O, fie for shame, hold your tongue. A passionate lover, and five senses in perfection! When you are as mad as Valentine, I'll believe you love me; and the maddest shall take me.

Val. It is enough. Ha! who's there?

Mrs F. O Lord, her coming will spoil all. [*To* JEREMY.

Jer. No, no, madam; he won't know her; if he should, I can persuade him—

Val. Scandal, who are these? Foreigners? If they are, I'll tell you what I think.—Get away all the company but Angelica, that I may discover my design to her. [*Whispers.*

Scan. I will. I have discovered something of Tattle, that is of a piece with Mrs Frail. He courts Angelica: if we could contrive to couple them together——Hark'e—— [*Whispers.*

Mrs For. He won't know you, cousin; he knows nobody.

For. But he knows more than any body. Oh, niece, he knows things past and to come, and all the profound secrets of time.

Tat. Look you, Mr Foresight, it is not my way to make many words of matters, and so I shan't

say much. But, in short, d'ye see, I will hold you an hundred pounds now, that I know more secrets than he.

For. How? I cannot read that knowledge in your face, Mr Tattle. Pray, what do you know?

Tat. Why, d'ye think I'll tell you, sir?—Read it in my face! No, sir, it is written in my heart; and safer there, sir, than letters written in juice of lemon, for no fire can fetch it out. I'm no blab, sir.

Val. Acquaint Jeremy with it; he may easily bring it about.—They are welcome, and I'll tell them so myself. [*To* SCANDAL.] What, do you look strange upon me?—Then I must be plain. [*Coming up to them.*] I am Honesty, and hate an old acquaintance with a new face.

[SCANDAL *goes aside with* JEREMY.

Tat. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. You? Who are you? I hope not.

Tat. I am Jack Tattle, your friend.

Val. My friend! what to do? I'm no married man, and thou canst not lie with my wife. I am very poor, and thou canst not borrow money of me. Then what employment have I for a friend?

Tat. Ha! a good open speaker, and not to be trusted with a secret.

Ang. Do you know me, Valentine?

Val. Oh, very well.

Ang. Who am I?

Val. You're a woman—one to whom Heaven gave beauty, when it grafted roses on a brier. You are the reflection of Heaven in a pond; and he that leaps at you is sunk. You are all white, a sheet of lovely spotless paper, when you were first born; but you are to be scrawled and blotted by every goose's quill. I know you; for I loved a woman, and loved her so long, that I found out a strange thing; I found out what a woman was good for.

Tat. Ay, pr'ythee, what's that?

Val. Why, to keep a secret.

Tat. O Lord!

Val. O, exceeding good to keep a secret: for though she should tell, yet she is not believed.

Tat. Hah! good again, faith.

Val. I would have music.—Sing me the song that I like.——

SONG.

I tell thee, Charmion, could I time retrieve,
And could again begin to love and live,
To you I should my early offering give;
I know my eyes would lend my heart to you,
And I should all my vows and oaths renew;
But, to be plain, I never would be true.

For, by our weak and weary truth, I find,
Love hates to centre in a point assign'd,
But runs with joy the circle of the mind:
Then never let us chain what should be free,
But for relief of either sex, agree:
Since women love to change, and so do we.

No more; for I'm melancholy. [*Walks musing.*

Jer. [JEREMY *and* SCANDAL *whisper.*] I'll do it, sir.

Scan. Mr Foresight, we had best leave him. He may grow outrageous, and do mischief.

For. I will be directed by you.

Jer. [*To Mrs* FRAIL.] You'll meet, madam?—I'll take care every thing shall be ready.

Mrs F. Thou shalt do what thou wilt; in short, I will deny thee nothing.

Tat. Madam, shall I wait upon you?

[*To* ANGELICA.

Ang. No, I'll stay with him.—Mr Scandal will protect me. Aunt, Mr Tattle desires you would give him leave to wait upon you.

Tat. Pox on't, there's no coming off, now she has said that—Madam, will you do me the honour?

Mrs For. Mr Tattle might have used less ceremony!

[*Exeunt Mrs* FRAIL, *Mr and Mrs* FORESIGHT, *and* TATTLE.

Scan. Jeremy, follow Tattle. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Ang. Mr Scandal, I only stay till my maid comes, and because I have a mind to be rid of Mr Tattle.

Scan. Madam, I am very glad that I overheard a better reason which you gave to Mr Tattle; for his impertinence forced you to acknowledge a kindness for Valentine, which you denied to all his sufferings and my solicitations. So I'll leave him to make use of the discovery; and your ladyship to the free confession of your inclinations.

Ang. Oh Heavens! you won't leave me alone with a madman?

Scan. No, madam: I only leave a madman to his remedy. [*Exit.*

Val. Madam, you need not be very much afraid, for I fancy I begin to come to myself.

Ang. Ay, but if I don't fit you, I'll be hang'd. [*Aside.*

Val. You see what disguises love makes us put on. Gods have been in counterfeited shapes for the same reason; and the divine part of me, my mind, has worn this mask of madness, and this motley livery, only as the slave of love, and menial creature of your beauty.

Ang. Mercy on me, how he talks!—Poor Valentine!

Val. Nay, faith, now let us understand one another, hypocrisy apart. The comedy draws towards an end; and let us think of leaving acting, and be ourselves; and, since you have loved me, you must own, I have at length deserved you should confess it.

Ang. [*Sighs.*] I would I had loved you!—for, Heaven knows, I pity you; and, could I have foreseen the bad effects, I would have striven; but that's too late!

Val. What bad effects? what's too late?—My seeming madness has deceived my father, and procured me time to think of means to reconcile me to him, and preserve the right of my inheritance to his estate; which otherwise, by articles, I must this morning have resigned. And this I had informed you of to-day, but you were gone before I knew you had been here.

Ang. How! I thought your love of me had caused this transport in your soul; which, it seems, you only counterfeited for mercenary ends and sordid interest.

Val. Nay, now you do me wrong; for, if any interest was considered, it was yours; since I thought I wanted more than love to make me worthy of you.

Ang. Then you thought me mercenary—But how am I deluded, by this interval of sense, to reason with a madman!

Val. Oh, 'tis barbarous to misunderstand me longer!

Enter JEREMY.

Ang. Oh, here's a reasonable creature—sure he will not have the impudence to persevere!—Come, Jeremy, acknowledge your trick, and confess your master's madness counterfeit.

Jer. Counterfeit, madam! I'll maintain him to be as absolutely and substantially mad, as any freeholder in Bedlam. Nay, he's as mad as any projector, fanatic, chemist, lover, or poet, in Europe.

Val. Sirrah, you lie; I am not mad.

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! you see he denies it.

Jer. O Lord, madam, did you ever know any madman mad enough to own it?

Val. Sot, cann't you apprehend?

Ang. Why he talk'd very sensibly just now.

Jer. Yes, madam; he has intervals: but you see he begins to look wild again now.

Val. Why, you thick-skulled rascal, I tell you the farce is done, and I'll be mad no longer.

[*Beats him.*

Ang. Ha, ha, ha! is he mad or no, Jeremy?

Jer. Partly, I think—for he does not know his own mind two hours. I'm sure I left him just now in the humour to be mad: and I think I have not found him very quiet at the present.—[*One knocks.*] Who's there?

Val. Go see, you sot.—I'm very glad that I can move your mirth, though not your compassion.

Ang. I did not think you had apprehension enough to be exceptious; but madmen shew themselves most by over-pretending to a sound understanding, as drunken men do by over-acting sobriety. I was half inclining to believe you, till I accidentally touched upon your tender part. But now you have restored me to my former opinion and compassion.

Jer. Sir, your father has sent to know if you are any better yet.—Will you please to be mad, sir, or how?

Val. Stupidity! you know the penalty of all I'm worth must pay for the confession of my senses. I'm mad, and will be mad, to every body but this lady.

Jer. So;—just the very back-side of truth. But lying is a figure in speech, that interlards the greatest part of my conversation.—Madam, your ladyship's woman.

Enter JENNY.

Ang. Well, have you been there?—Come hither.

Jenny. Yes, madam; Sir Sampson will wait upon you presently. [*Aside to* ANGELICA.

Val. You are not leaving me in this uncertainty?

Ang. Would any thing but a madman complain of uncertainty? Uncertainty and expectation are the joys of life. Security is an insipid thing; and the overtaking and possessing of a wish discovers the folly of the chace. Never let us know one another better; for the pleasure of a masquerade is done, when we come to shew our faces. But I'll tell you two things before I leave you; I am not the fool you take me for; and you are mad, and don't know it.

[*Exeunt* ANGELICA *and* JENNY.

Val. From a riddle you can expect nothing but a riddle. There's my instruction, and the moral of my lesson.

Jer. What, is the lady gone again, sir? I hope you understood one another before she went?

Val. Understood! she is harder to be understood than a piece of Egyptian antiquity, or an Irish manuscript; you may pore till you spoil your eyes, and not improve your knowledge.

Jer. I have heard them say, sir, they read hard Hebrew books backwards. May be you begin to read at the wrong end!

Val. They say so of a witch's prayer; and dreams and Dutch almanacks are to be understood by contraries. But there is regularity and method in that: she is a medal without a reverse or inscription, for indifference has both sides alike. Yet, while she does not seem to hate me, I will pursue her, and know her if it be possible, in spite of the opinion of my satirical friend, who says,

That women are like tricks by sleight of hand;
Which, to admire, we should not understand.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Room in* FORESIGHT'S *House.*

Enter ANGELICA *and* JENNY.

Ang. Where is Sir Sampson? did you not tell me he would be here before me?

Jenny. He's at the great glass in the dining-room, madam, setting his cravat and wig.

Ang. How! I'm glad on't.—If he has a mind I should like him, it's a sign he likes me; and that's more than half my design.

Jenny. I hear him, madam.

Ang. Leave me; and, d'ye hear, if Valentine should come, or send, I'm not to be spoken with.

[*Exit* JENNY.

Enter Sir SAMPSON.

Sir S. I have not been honoured with the commands of a fair lady a great while—Odd, madam, you have revived me—not since I was five and thirty.

Ang. Why, you have no great reason to complain, Sir Sampson; that's not long ago.

Sir S. Zooks, but it is, madam, a very great while; to a man that admires a fine woman as much as I do.

Ang. You're an absolute courtier, Sir Sampson.

Sir S. Not at all, madam. Odsbud, you wrong me: I am not so old neither, to be a bare courtier, only a man of words. Odd, I have warm blood about me yet, and can serve a lady any way.—Come, come, let me tell you, you women think a man old too soon, faith and troth you do.—Come, don't despise fifty; odd, fifty, in a hale constitution, is no such contemptible age!

Ang. Fifty a contemptible age! not at all: a very fashionable age, I think—I assure you, I know very considerable beaux, that set a good face upon fifty.—Fifty! I have seen fifty in a side-box, by candle-light, out-blossom five and twenty.

Sir S. Outsides, outsides; a pize take them, mere outsides! Hang your side-box beaux; no, I'm none of those, none of your forced trees, that pretend to blossom in the fall, and bud when they should bring forth fruit. I am of a long-lived race, and inherit vigour. None of my ancestors married till fifty; yet they begot sons and daughters till fourscore. I am of your patriarchs, I, a branch of one of your antediluvian families, fellows that the flood could not wash away. Well, madam, what are your commands? Has any young rogue affronted you, and shall I cut his throat, or——

Ang. No, Sir Sampson, I have no quarrel upon my hands—I have more occasion for your conduct than your courage at this time. To tell you the truth, I'm weary of living single, and want a husband.

Sir S. Odsbud, and it is a pity you should!—Odd, would she would like me! then I should hamper my young rogues: odd, would she would; faith and troth, she's devilish handsome! [*Aside.*]——Madam, you deserve a good husband! and 'twere pity you should be thrown away upon any of these young idle rogues about the town. Odd, there's ne'er a young fellow worth hanging—that is, a *very* young fellow——Pize on them, they never think beforehand of any thing—and if they commit matrimony, 'tis as they commit murder—out of a frolic; and are ready to hang themselves, or to be hanged by the law, the next morning.—Odso, have a care, madam.

Ang. Therefore I ask your advice, Sir Sampson. I have fortune enough to make any man easy that I can like; if there was such a thing as a young agreeable man, with a reasonable stock of good-nature and sense——for I would neither have an absolute wit, nor a fool.

Sir S. Odd, you are hard to please, madam: to find a young fellow that is neither a wit in his own eye, nor a fool in the eye of the world, is a very hard task. But, faith and troth, you speak very discreetly; for I hate both a wit and a fool.

Ang. She that marries a fool, Sir Sampson, forfeits the reputation of her honesty or understanding; and she that marries a very witty man, is a slave to the severity and insolent conduct of her husband. I should like a man of wit for a lover, because I would have such a one in my power: but I would no more be his wife than his enemy; for his malice is not a more terrible consequence of his aversion, than his jealousy is of his love.

Sir S. None of old Foresight's sibyls ever uttered such a truth. Odsbud, you have won my heart. I hate a wit; I had a son that was spoilt among them; a good hopeful lad, till he learnt to be a wit—and might have risen in the state.—But, a pox on't, his wit ran him out of his money, and now his poverty has run him out of his wits.

Ang. Sir Sampson, as your friend, I must tell you, you are very much abused in that matter—he's no more mad than you are.

Sir S. How, madam! would I could prove it!

Ang. I can tell you how that may be done—but it is a thing that would make me appear to be too much concerned in your affairs.

Sir S. Odsbud, I believe she likes me! [*Aside.*]——Ah, madam, all my affairs are scarce worthy to be laid at your feet; and I wish, madam, they were in a better posture, that I might make a more becoming offer to a lady of your incomparable beauty and merit.—If I had Peru in one hand, and Mexico in t'other, and the Eastern empire under my feet, it would make me only a more glorious victim, to be offered at the shrine of your beauty.

Ang. Bless me, Sir Sampson, what's the matter?

Sir S. Odd, madam, I love you—and if you would take my advice in a husband——

Ang. Hold, hold, Sir Sampson; I asked your advice for a husband, and you are giving me your consent. I was indeed thinking to propose something like it in jest, to satisfy you about Valentine: for, if a match were seemingly carried on between you and me, it would oblige him to throw off his disguise of madness, in apprehension of losing me; for, you know, he has long pretended a passion for me.

Sir S. Gadzooks, a most ingenious contrivance,—if we were to go through with it! But why must the match only be seemingly carried on? Odd, let it be a real contract.

Ang. O fie, Sir Sampson, what would the world say?

Sir S. Say? They would say you were a wise woman, and I a happy man. Odd, madam, I'll love you as long as I live, and leave you a good jointure when I die.

Ang. Ay, but that is not in your power, Sir Sampson, for when Valentine confesses himself in his senses, he must make over his inheritance to his younger brother.

Sir S. Odd, you're cunning, a wary baggage. Faith and troth, I like you the better. But, I warrant you, I have a proviso in the obligation in favour of myself. Body o'me, I have a trick to turn the settlement upon the issue male of our two bodies begotten. Odsbud, let us find children, and I'll find an estate!

Ang. Will you? Well, do you find the estate, and leave the other to me!

Sir S. O rogue! but I'll trust you. And will you consent? Is it a match then?

Ang. Let me consult my lawyer concerning this obligation; and, if I find what you propose practicable, I'll give you my answer.

Sir S. With all my heart. Come in with me, and I'll lend you the bond. You shall consult your lawyer, and I'll consult a parson. Odzooks, I'm a young man; Odzooks, I'm a young man, and I'll make it appear—Odd, you're devilish handsome. Faith and troth, you're very handsome: and I'm very young, and very lusty. Odsbud, hussy, you know how to choose, and so do I. Odd, I think we are very well met. Give me your hand; odd, let me kiss it; 'tis as warm and as soft—as what?—odd, as t'other hand!—Give me t'other hand; and I'll mumble them, and kiss them, till they melt in my mouth.

Ang. Hold, Sir Sampson—You're profuse of your vigour before your time. You'll spend your estate before you come to it.

Sir S. No, no, only give you a rent-roll of my possessions—Ah! baggage!—I warrant you for a little Sampson. Odd, Sampson is a very good name for an able fellow. Your Sampsons were strong dogs from the beginning.

Ang. Have a care, and don't over-act your part. If you remember, Sampson, the strongest of the name, pulled an old house over his head at last.

Sir S. Say you so, hussy?—Come, let's go then: odd, I long to be pulling too. Come away—— Odso, here's somebody coming. [*Exeunt.*

Enter TATTLE *and* JEREMY.

Tat. Is not that she, gone out just now?

Jer. Ay, sir, she's just going to the place of appointment. Ah, sir, if you are not very faithful and close in this business, you'll certainly be the death of a person that has a most extraordinary passion for your honour's service!

Tat. Ay, who's that?

Jer. Even my unworthy self, sir. Sir, I have had an appetite to be fed with your commands a great while—And now, sir, my former master having much troubled the fountain of his understanding, it is a very plausible occasion for me to quench my thirst at the spring of your bounty. I thought I could not recommend myself better to you, sir, than by the delivery of a great beauty and fortune into your arms, whom I have heard you sigh for.

Tat. I'll make thy fortune; say no more. Thou art a pretty fellow, and canst carry a message to a lady, in a pretty soft kind of phrase, and with a good persuading accent?

Jer. Sir, I have the seeds of rhetoric and oratory in my head—I have been at Cambridge.

Tat. Ay; 'tis well enough for a servant to be bred at an university; but the education is a little too pedantic for a gentleman. I hope you are secret in your nature, private, close, ha?

Jer. O sir, for that, sir, 'tis my chief talent; I'm as secret as the head of Nilus.

Tat. Ay? who's he, though? A privy-councellor?

Jer. O ignorance! [*Aside.*]—A cunning Egyptian; sir, that with his arms could over-run the country, yet nobody could ever find out his head-quarters.

Tat. Close dog! a good whoremaster, I warrant him!—The time draws nigh, Jeremy; Angelica will be veiled like a nun, and I must be hooded like a friar; ha, Jeremy?

Jer. Ay, sir, hooded like a hawk, to seize at first sight upon the quarry. It is the whim of my master's madness to be so dressed; and she is so in love with him, she'll comply with any thing to please him. Poor lady! I'm sure she'll have reason to pray for me, when she finds what a happy change she has made, between a madman and so accomplished a gentleman.

Tat. Ay, faith, so she will, Jeremy: You're a good friend to her, poor creature!—I swear I do it hardly so much in consideration of myself, as compassion to her.

Jer. 'Tis an act of charity, sir, to save a fine woman with thirty thousand pounds from throwing herself away.

Tat. So 'tis, faith! I might have saved several others in my time; but egad I could never find in my heart to marry any body before.

Jer. Well, sir, I'll go and tell her my master's coming; and meet you in half a quarter of an hour, with your disguise, at your own lodgings. You must talk a little madly;—she won't distinguish the tone of your voice.

Tat. No, no, let me alone for a counterfeit. I'll be ready for you. [*Exit* JEREMY.

Enter Miss PRUE.

Miss P. O, Mr Tattle, are you here? I'm glad I have found you. I have been looking up and down for you like any thing, till I'm as tired as any thing in the world.

Tat. O pox! how shall I get rid of this foolish girl? [*Aside.*

Miss P. O, I have pure news, I can tell you pure news—I must not marry the seaman now—My father says so. Why won't you be my husband? You say you love me! and you won't be my husband? And I know you may be my husband now, if you please.

Tat. O fie, miss! who told you so, child?

Miss P. Why, my father——I told him that you loved me.

Tat. O fie, miss! why did you do so? and who told you so, child?

Miss P. Who? Why you did, did not you?

Tat. O pox, that was yesterday, miss; that was a great while ago, child. I have been asleep since; slept a whole night, and did not so much as dream of the matter.

Miss P. Pshaw! O but I dreamt that it was so though.

Tat. Ay, but your father will tell you that dreams come by contraries, child. O fie! what, we must not love one another now. Pshaw, that would be a foolish thing indeed! Fie, fie! you're a woman now, and must think of a new man every morning, and forget him every night. No, no, to marry is to be a child again, and play with the same rattle always: O fie, marrying is a paw thing!

Miss P. Well, but don't you love me as well as you did last night then?

Tat. No, no, child, you would not have me.

Miss P. No? Yes but I would though.

Tat. Pshaw, but I tell you, you would not. You forget you are a woman, and don't know your own mind.

Miss P. But here's my father, and he knows my mind.

Enter FORESIGHT.

For. O, Mr Tattle, your servant, you are a close man; but methinks your love to my daughter was a secret I might have been trusted with! —or had you a mind to try if I could discover it by my art?—Hum, ha! I think there is something in your physiognomy that has a resemblance of her; and the girl is like me.

Tat. And so you would infer that you and I are alike?—What does the old prig mean? I'll banter him, and laugh at him, and leave him.—[*Aside.*]——I fancy you have a wrong notion of faces.

For. How? what? a wrong notion! how so?

Tat. In the way of art, I have some taking features, not obvious to vulgar eyes, that are indicative of a sudden turn of good fortune in the lottery of wives; and promise a great beauty and great fortune reserved alone for me, by a private intrigue of destiny, kept secret from the piercing eye of perspicuity, from all astrologers, and the stars themselves.

For. How! I will make it appear, that what you say is impossible.

Tat. Sir, I beg your pardon; I am in haste—

For. For what?

Tat. To be married, sir—married.

For. Ay, but pray take me along with you, sir.

Tat. No, sir; it is to be done privately—I never make confidants.

For. Well, but my consent, I mean—You won't marry my daughter without my consent?

Tat. Who, I, sir? I am an absolute stranger to you and your daughter, sir.

For. Hey-day! What time of the moon is this?

Tat. Very true, sir; and desire to continue so. —I have no more love for your daughter than I have likeness of you—and I have a secret in my heart which you would be glad to know, and sha'n't know; and yet you shall know it too, and be sorry for it afterwards.—I'd have you know, sir, that I'm as knowing as the stars, and as secret as the night.—And I'm going to be married just now, yet did not know of it half an hour ago; and the lady stays for me, and does not know of it yet. There's a mystery for you. I know you love to untie difficulties. Or, if you cann't solve this, stay here a quarter of an hour, and I'll come and explain it to you. [*Exit.*

Miss P. O father! why will you let him go? Won't you make him to be my husband?

For. Mercy on us! what do these lunacies portend?—Alas, he's mad, child—stark wild.

Miss P. What, and must not I have e'er a husband then?—What, must I go to bed to nurse again, and be a child as long as she's an old woman?—Indeed, but I won't. For, now my mind is set upon a man, I will have a man some way or other.—Oh, methinks I'm sick when I think of a man! And if I cann't have one, I would go to sleep all my life; for, when I'm awake, it makes me wish and long, and I don't know for what, and I'd rather be always asleep, than sick with thinking.

For. O fearful! I think the girl's influenced too:—Hussy, you shall have a rod.

Miss P. A fiddle of a rod! I'll have a husband; and if you won't get me one, I'll get one for myself. I'll marry our Robin the butler: he says he loves me; and he's a handsome man, and shall be my husband. I warrant he'll be my husband, and thank me too; for he told me so.

Enter SCANDAL, *Mrs* FORESIGHT, *and Nurse.*

For. Did he so?—I'll dispatch him for it presently. Rogue!—O nurse, come hither!

Nurse. What is your worship's pleasure?

For. Here, take your young mistress, and lock her up presently, till further orders from me.—Not a word, hussy! Do what I bid you. No reply—away!—and bid Robin make ready to give an account of his plate and linen—d'ye hear? Be gone, when I bid you.

[*Exeunt Nurse and Miss* PRUE.

Mrs For. What's the matter, husband?

For. 'Tis not convenient to tell you now.——Mr Scandal, Heaven keep us all in our senses! I fear there is a contagious frenzy abroad.—How does Valentine?

Scan. O, I hope he will do well again! I have a message from him to your niece Angelica.

For. I think she has not return'd since she went abroad with Sir Sampson.—Nurse, why are you not gone?—[*Enter* BEN.]—Here's Mr Benjamin; he can tell us if his father be come home.

Ben. Who, father? Ay, he's come home with a vengeance.

Mrs For. Why, what's the matter?

Ben. Matter! Why, he's mad.

For. Mercy on us! I was afraid of this.

Ben. And there's a handsome young woman;

she, as they say brother Val went mad for, she's mad too, I think.

For. O my poor niece! my poor niece! is she gone too?—Well, I shall run mad next.

Mrs For. Well, but how mad? How d'ye mean?

Ben. Nay, I'll give you leave to guess.——I'll undertake to make a voyage to Antigua—no, I mayn't say so neither—but I'll sail as far as Leghorn, and back again, before you shall guess at the matter, and do nothing else.—Mess! you may take in all the points of the compass, and not hit the right.

Mrs For. Your experiment will take up a little too much time.

Ben. Why, then, I'll tell you—There's a new wedding upon the stocks; and they two are going to be married to rights.

Scan. Who?

Ben. Why, father and——the young woman: I cann't hit her name.

Scan. Angelica?

Ben. Ay, the same.

Mrs For. Sir Sampson and Angelica? Impossible!

Ben. That may be; but I'm sure it is as I tell you.

Scan. 'Sdeath! it is a jest, I cann't believe it.

Ben. Look you, friend; it is nothing to me whether you believe it or no. What I say is true, d'ye see; they are married, or just going to be married, I know not which.

For. Well, but they are not mad; that is, not lunatic?

Ben. I don't know what you call madness; but she's mad for a husband, and he's horn-mad, I think, or they'd never make a match together. —Here they come.

Enter Sir SAMPSON, ANGELICA, *and* BUCKRAM.

Sir S. Where is this old soothsayer? this uncle of mine elect?—Aha, old Foresight! uncle Foresight! wish me joy, uncle Foresight! double joy, both as uncle and astrologer! Here's a conjunction that was not foretold in all your Ephemeres! The brightest star in the blue firmament is shot from above in a jelly of love, and so forth; and I'm lord of the ascendant.—Odd, you're an old fellow, Foresight—uncle, I mean; a very old fellow, uncle Foresight; and yet you shall live to dance at my wedding; faith and troth you shall. —Odd, we'll have the music of the spheres for thee, old Lilly, that we will; and thou shalt lead up a dance in *via lactea*.

For. I'm thunder-struck! You are not married to my niece?

Sir S. Not absolutely married, uncle; but very near it; within a kiss of the matter, as you see.

[*Kisses* ANGELICA.

Ang. 'Tis very true indeed, uncle; I hope you'll be my father, and give me.

Sir S. That he shall, or I'll burn his globes.—Body o' me, he shall be thy father; I'll make him thy father, and thou shalt make me a father, and I'll make thee a mother; and we'll beget sons and daughters enough to put the weekly bills out of countenance.

Scan. Death and hell! where's Valentine?

[*Exit.*

Mrs For. This is so surprising——

Sir S. How! What does my aunt say? surprising, aunt? Not at all, for a young couple to make a match in winter; not at all. It's a plot to undermine cold weather, and destroy that usurper of a bed call'd a warming-pan.

Mrs For. I'm glad to hear you have so much fire in you, Sir Sampson.

Ben. Mess! I fear his fire's little better than tinder; mayhap it will only serve to light a match for somebody else.—The young woman's a handsome young woman, I cann't deny it; but, father, if I might be your pilot in this case, you should not marry her. It is just the same thing as if so be you should sail as far as the Streights without provision.

Sir S. Who gave you authority to speak, sirrah?—To your element, fish! Be mute, fish, and to sea. Rule your helm, sirrah; don't direct me.

Ben. Well, well, take you care of your own helm, or you mayn't keep your new vessel steady.

Sir S. Why, you impudent tarpawling! sirrah, do you bring your forecastle jests upon your father?—But I shall be even with you; I won't give you a groat.—Mr Buckram, is the conveyance so worded, that nothing can possibly descend to this scoundrel? I would not so much as have him have the prospect of an estate, though there were no way to come to it but by the north-east passage.

Buck. Sir, it is drawn according to your directions; there is not the least cranny of the law unstopt.

Ben. Lawyer, I believe there's many a cranny and leak unstopt in your conscience. If so be that one had a pump to your bosom, I believe we should discover a foul hold.—They say a witch will sail in a sieve; but I believe the devil would not venture aboard with your conscience. And that's for you.

Sir S. Hold your tongue, sirrah.—How now! Who's here?

Enter TATTLE *and Mrs* FRAIL.

Mrs F. O, sister, the most unlucky accident!

Mrs For. What's the matter?

Tat. O, the two most unfortunate poor creatures in the world we are!

For. Bless us! how so?

Mrs F. Ah! Mr Tattle and I, poor Mr Tattle and I, are——I cann't speak it out.

Tat. Nor I—But poor Mrs Frail and I are—

Mrs F. Married.

For. Married! How?

Tat. Suddenly——before we knew where we were——that villain Jeremy, by the help of disguises, trick'd us into one another.

For. Why, you told me just now, you went hence in haste to be married.

Ang. But I believe Mr Tattle meant the favour to me—I thank him.

Tat. I did, as I hope to be saved, madam; my intentions were good.—But this is the most cruel thing, to marry one does not know how, nor why, nor wherefore! The devil take me, if ever I was so much concern'd at any thing in my life.

Ang. 'Tis very unhappy, if you don't care for one another.

Tat. The least in the world; that is, for my part, I speak for myself.—Gad, I never had the least thought of serious kindness—I never liked any body less in my life—Poor woman! Gad, I'm sorry for her too; for I have no reason to hate her neither; but I believe I shall lead her a damn'd sort of a life.

Mrs For. He's better than no husband at all, though he's a coxcomb. [*To Mrs* FRAIL.

Mrs F. [*To her.*] Ay, ay, it's well it's no worse. —Nay, for my part, I always despised Mr Tattle of all things; nothing but his being my husband could have made me like him less.

Tat. Look you there! I thought as much.—Pox on't! I wish we could keep it secret. Why, I don't believe any of this company would speak of it.

Ben. If you suspect me, friend, I'll go out of the room.

Mrs F. But, my dear, that's impossible; the parson and that rogue Jeremy will publish it.

Tat. Ay, my dear, so they will, as you say.

Ang. O you'll agree very well in a little time; custom will make it easy for you.

Tat. Easy! Pox on't, I don't believe I shall sleep to-night.

Sir S. Sleep, quoth-a! No, why you would not sleep on your wedding-night? I'm an older fellow than you, and don't mean to sleep.

Ben. Why, there's another match now, as thof a couple of privateers were looking for a prize, and should fall foul of one another. I'm sorry for the young man with all my heart. Look you, friend, if I may advise you, when she's going—for that you must expect, I have experience of her —when she's going, let her go. For no matrimony is tough enough to hold her; and if she cann't drag her anchor along with her, she'll break her cable, I can tell you that. Who's here? the madman?

Enter VALENTINE, SCANDAL, *and* JEREMY.

Val. No; here's the fool; and, if occasion be, I'll give it under my hand.

Sir S. How now?

Val. Sir, I'm come to acknowledge my errors, and ask your pardon.

Sir S. What, have you found your senses at last then? In good time, sir.

Val. You were abused, sir; I never was distracted.

For. How? not mad, Mr Scandal?

Scan. No, really, sir; I'm his witness, it was all counterfeit.

Val. I thought I had reasons——but it was a poor contrivance: the effect has shewn it such.

Sir S. Contrivance! what, to cheat me? to cheat your father? Sirrah, could you hope to prosper?

Val. Indeed I thought, sir, when the father endeavoured to undo the son, it was a reasonable return of nature.

Sir S. Very good, sir. Mr Buckram, are you ready? Come, sir, will you sign and seal?

Val. If you please, sir; but first I would ask this lady one question.

Sir S. Sir, you must ask me leave first—That lady! No, sir; you shall ask that lady no questions, till you have asked her blessing, sir; that lady is to be my wife.

Val. I have heard as much, sir; but I would have it from her own mouth.

Sir S. That's as much as to say, I lie, sir; and you don't believe what I say.

Val. Pardon me, sir. But I reflect that I very lately counterfeited madness: I don't know but the frolic may go round.

Sir S. Come, chuck, satisfy him, answer him. ——Come, Mr Buckram, the pen and ink.

Buck. Here it is, sir, with the deed; all is ready. [VAL. *goes to* ANG.

Ang. 'Tis true, you have a great while pretended love to me; nay, what if you were sincere, still you must pardon me, if I think my own inclinations have a better right to dispose of my person than yours.

Sir S. Are you answered now, sir?

Val. Yes, sir.

Sir S. Where's your plot, sir? and your contrivance now, sir? Will you sign, sir? Come, will you sign and seal?

Val. With all my heart, sir.

Scan. 'Sdeath, you are not mad indeed, to ruin yourself?

Val. I have been disappointed of my only hope, and he that loses hope may part with any thing. I never valued fortune, but as it was subservient to my pleasure; and my only pleasure was to please this lady: I have made many vain attempts, and find at last that nothing but my ruin can effect it; which, for that reason, I will sign to.—Give me the paper.

Ang. Generous Valentine! [*Aside.*

Buck. Here is the deed, sir.

Val. But where is the bond, by which I am obliged to sign this?

Buck. Sir Sampson, you have it.

Ang. No, I have it; and I'll use it, as I would every thing that is an enemy to Valentine. [*Tears the paper.*

Sir S. How now?

Val. Ha!

Ang. Had I the world to give you, it could not make me worthy of so generous and faithful a passion. Here's my hand; my heart was always yours, and struggled very hard to make this utmost trial of your virtue. [*To* VAL.

Val. Between pleasure and amazement I am lost—but on my knees I take the blessing.

Sir S. Oons, what is the meaning of this?

Ben. Mess, here's the wind changed again!—Father, you and I may make a voyage together now!

Ang Well, Sir Sampson, since I have played you a trick, I'll advise you how you may avoid such another. Learn to be a good father, or you'll never get a second wife. I always loved your son, and hated your unforgiving nature. I was resolved to try him to the utmost; I have tried you too, and know you both. You have not more faults than he has virtues; and it is hardly more pleasure to me, that I can make him and myself happy, than that I can punish you.

Val. If my happiness could receive addition, this kind surprise would make it double.

Sir S. Oons, you're a crocodile!

For. Really, Sir Sampson, this is a sudden eclipse.

Sir S. You're an illiterate old fool; and I'm another.

Tat. If the gentleman is in disorder for want of a wife, I can spare him mine. Oh, are you there, sir? I am indebted to you for my happiness. [*To* JEREMY.

Jer. Sir, I ask you ten thousand pardons: it was an arrant mistake. You see, sir, my master was never mad, nor any thing like it.—Then how can it be otherwise?

Val. Tattle, I thank you; you would have interposed between me and heaven; but Providence laid purgatory in your way. You have but justice.

Scan. I hear the fiddles that Sir Sampson provided for his own wedding; methinks it is pity they should not be employed when the match is so much mended. Valentine, though it be morning, we may have a dance.

Val. Any thing, my friend; every thing that looks like joy and transport.

Scan. Call them, Jeremy.

Ang. I have done dissembling now, Valentine; and if that coldness which I have always worn before you should turn to an extreme fondness, you must not suspect it.

Val. I'll prevent that suspicion—for I intend to dote to that immoderate degree, that your fondness shall never distinguish itself enough to be taken notice of. If ever you seem to love too much, it must be only when I cann't love enough.

Ang. Have a care of promises: you know you are apt to run more in debt than you are able to pay.

Val. Therefore I yield my body as your prisoner, and make your best on't.

Scan. The music stays for you. [*A Dance.* [*To* ANG.] Well, madam, you have done exemplary justice, in punishing an inhuman father, and rewarding a faithful lover: but there is a third good work, which I, in particular, must thank you for: I was an infidel to your sex, and you have converted me——for now I am convinced that all women are not, like fortune, blind in bestowing favours, either on those who do not merit, or who do not want them.

Ang. It is an unreasonable accusation, that you lay upon our sex. You tax us with injustice, only to cover your own want of merit. You would all have the reward of love; but few have the constancy to stay till it becomes your due. Men are generally hypocrites and infidels; they pretend to worship, but have neither zeal nor faith. How few, like Valentine, would persevere, even to martyrdom, and sacrifice their interest to their constancy! In admiring me, you misplace the novelty.

The miracle to-day is, that we find
A lover true; not that a woman's kind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SURE Providence at first design'd this place
To be the player's refuge in distress;
For still, in every storm, they all run hither,
As to a shed, that shields them from the weather.
But, thinking of this change which last befel us,
It's like what I have heard our poets tell us:
For when behind our scenes their suits are pleading,
To help their love, sometimes they shew their reading;
And, wanting ready cash to pay for hearts,
They top their learning on us and their parts.
Once of philosophers they told us stories,
Whom, as I think they called—Py—Pythagories;
I'm sure 'tis some such Latin name they give them,
And we, who know no better, must believe them.
Now to these men (say they) such souls were given,
That, after death, ne'er went to hell nor heaven,
But lived, I know not how, in beasts; and then,
When many years were pass'd, in men again.
Methinks, we players resemble such a soul,
That does from bodies, we from houses stroll.

Thus Aristotle's soul, of old that was,
May now be damn'd to animate an ass;
Or in this very house, for aught we know,
Is doing painful penance in some beau:
And thus our audience, which did once resort
To shining theatres, to see our sport,
Now find us toss'd into a tennis court.
These walls but t'other day were fill'd with noise
Of roaring gamesters, and your damme boys;
Then bounding balls and rackets they encompast;
And now they're fill'd with jests, and flights, and bombast!
I vow, I don't much like this transmigration,
Strolling from place to place, by circulation;
Grant Heav'n, we don't return to our first station!
I know not what these think; but, for my part,
I cann't reflect without an aching heart,
How we should end in our original—a cart.
But we cann't fear, since you're so good to save us,
That you have only set us up to leave us.
Thus, from the past, we hope for future grace,
I beg it——
And some here know I have a begging face.
Then pray continue this your kind behaviour;
For a clear stage won't do, without your favour.

THE

WAY OF THE WORLD.

BY

CONGREVE.

PROLOGUE.

Of those few fools who with ill stars are curst,
Sure scribbling fools, call'd poets, fare the worst:
For they're a set of fools which Fortune makes,
And, after she has made 'em fools, forsakes.
With Nature's oafs 'tis quite a different case,
For Fortune favours all her idiot-race:
In her own nest the cuckoo-eggs we find,
O'er which she broods to hatch the changeling-kind.
No portion for her own she has to spare,
So much she dotes on her adopted care.
Poets are bubbles, by the town drawn in,
Suffer'd at first some trifling stakes to win:
But what unequal hazards do they run!
Each time they write, they venture all they've won:
The squire that's butter'd still, is sure to be undone.
This author, heretofore, has found your favour;
But pleads no merit from his past behaviour.
To build on that might prove a vain presumption;
Should grants, to poets made, admit resumption:
And in Parnassus he must lose his seat,
If that be found a forfeited estate.

He owns with toil he wrote the following scenes;
But, if they're naught, ne'er spare him for his pains.
Damn him the more; have no commiseration
For dulness on mature deliberation.
He swears he'll not resent one hiss'd-off scene,
Nor, like those peevish wits, his play maintain,
Who, to assert their sense, your taste arraign.
Some plot we think he has, and some new thought:
Some humour too, no farce; but that's a fault.
Satire, he thinks, you ought not to expect;
For so reform'd a town, who dares correct?
To please, this time, has been his sole pretence,
He'll not instruct, lest it should give offence.
Should he by chance a knave or fool expose,
That hurts none here, sure here are none of those.
In short, our play shall (with your leave to shew it)
Give you one instance of a passive poet,
Who to your judgments yields all resignation,
To save, or damn, after your own discretion.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

FAINALL, *in love with Mrs Marwood.*
MIRABELL, *in love with Mrs Millamant.*
WITWOULD, } *Followers of Mrs Millamant.*
PETULANT, }
Sir WILFUL WITWOULD, *Half-brother to Witwould.*
WAITWELL, *Servant to Mirabell.*

WOMEN.

Lady WISHFORT, *Enemy to Mirabell.*
Mrs MILLAMANT, *a fine Lady, Niece to Lady Wishfort, and loves Mirabell.*
Mrs MARWOOD, *Friend to Mr Fainall, and likes Mirabell.*
Mrs FAINALL, *Daughter to Lady Wishfort.*
FOIBLE, *Woman to Lady Wishfort.*
MINCING, *Woman to Mrs Millament.*

Footmen and Attendants.

SCENE,—*London—The Time equal to that of the Representation.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Chocolate-House.* MIRABELL *and* FAINALL *rising from Cards.* BETTY *waiting.*

Mira. You are a fortunate man, Mr Fainall.

Fain. Have we done?

Mira. What you please. I'll play on to entertain you.

Fain. No; I'll give you your revenge another time, when you are not so indifferent; you are thinking of something else now, and play too negligently: the coldness of a losing gamester lessens the pleasure of the winner. I'd no more play with a man that slighted his ill-fortune, than I'd make love to a woman who undervalued the loss of her reputation.

Mira. You have a taste extremely delicate, and are for refining on your pleasures.

Fain. Pr'ythee, why so reserved? Something has put you out of humour.

Mira. Not at all; I happen to be grave to-day, and you are gay, that's all.

Fain. Confess, Millamant and you quarrell'd last night, after I left you: my fair cousin has some humours that would tempt the patience of a stoic.—What, some coxcomb came in, and was well received by her, while you were by?

Mira. Witwould and Petulant; and, what was worse, her aunt, your wife's mother, my evil genius; or, to sum up all in her own name, my old Lady Wishfort came in.

Fain. O, there it is then——She has a lasting passion for you, and with reason.——What, then my wife was there?

Mira. Yes; and Mrs Marwood, and three or four more whom I never saw before: seeing me, they all put on their grave faces, whisper'd one to another; then complain'd aloud of the vapours, and after fell into a profound silence.

Fain. They had a mind to be rid of you.

Mira. For which reason I resolved not to stir. At last the good old lady broke through her painful taciturnity, with an invective against long visits. I would not have understood her; but Millamant joining in the argument, I rose, and, with a constrain'd smile, told her, I thought nothing was so easy as to know when a visit began to be troublesome: she redden'd, and I withdrew, without expecting her reply.

Fain. You were to blame, to resent what she spoke only in compliance with her aunt.

Mira. She is more mistress of herself than to be under the necessity of such resignation.

Fain. What, though half her fortune depends upon her marrying with my lady's approbation?

Mira. I was then in such a humour, that I should have been better pleased if she had been less discreet.

Fain. Now I remember, I wonder not they were weary of you; last night was one of their cabal nights: they have 'em three times a-week, and meet by turns at one another's apartments, where they come together, like the coroner's inquest, to sit upon the murder'd reputations of the week. You and I are excluded; and it was once proposed that all the male sex should be excepted; but somebody moved, that, to avoid scandal, there might be one man of the community; upon which motion Witwould and Petulant were enroll'd members.

Mira. And who may have been the foundress of this sect? My Lady Wishfort, I warrant, who publishes her detestation of mankind; and, full of the vigour of fifty-five, declares for a friend and ratafia; and let posterity shift for itself, she'll breed no more.

Fain. The discovery of your sham addresses to her, to conceal your love to her niece, has provoked this separation: had you dissembled better, things might have continued in the state of nature.

Mira. I did as much as man could, with any reasonable conscience; I proceeded to the very last act of flattery with her, and was guilty of a song in her commendation. Nay, I got a friend to put her into a lampoon, and compliment her with the addresses of an affair with a young fellow, which I carried so far, that I told her the malicious town took notice that she was grown fat of a sudden; and when she lay in of a dropsy, persuaded her she was reported to be in labour. —The devil's in't if an old woman is to be flatter'd farther, unless a man should endeavour downright personally to debauch her; and that my virtue forbade me.—But for the discovery of this amour, I am indebted to your friend, or your wife's friend, Mrs Marwood.

Fain. What should provoke her to be your enemy, unless she has made you advances which you have slighted? Women do not easily forgive omissions of that nature.

Mira. She was always civil to me till of late: I confess I am not one of those coxcombs who are apt to interpret a woman's good manners to her prejudice, and think that she who does not refuse 'em every thing can refuse 'em nothing.

Fain. You are a gallant man, Mirabell; and though you may have cruelty enough not to answer a lady's advances, you have too much generosity not to be tender of her honour. Yet you speak with an indifference which seems to be affected, and confesses you are conscious of a negligence.

Mira. You pursue the argument with a distrust that seems to be unaffected, and confesses you are conscious of a concern for which the lady is more indebted to you than is your wife.

Fain. Fie, fie, friend! if you grow censorious,

I must leave you—I'll look upon the gamesters in the next room.

Mira. Who are they?

Fain. Petulant and Witwould.—Bring me some chocolate. [*Exit.*

Mira. Betty, what says your clock?

Betty. Turn'd of the last canonical hour, sir.

Mira. How pertinently the jade answers me! Ha! almost one o'clock! [*Looking at his watch.*] —O, ye're come——

A Footman enters.

Well, is the grand affair over? You have been something tedious.

Foot. Sir, there's such coupling at Pancras, that they stand behind one another, as 'twere in a country dance. Ours was the last couple to lead up; and no hopes appearing of dispatch, besides the parson growing hoarse, we were afraid his lungs would have fail'd before it came to our turn; so we drove round to Duke's-Place, and there they were rivetted in a trice.

Mira. So, so; you are sure they are married?

Foot. Incontestibly, sir; I am witness.

Mira. Have you the certificate?

Foot. Here it is, sir.

Mira. Has the tailor brought Waitwell's clothes home, and the new liveries?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Mira. That's well.—Do you go home again, d'ye hear, and adjourn the consummation till farther order: bid Waitwell shake his ears, and dame Partlet rustle up her feathers, and meet me at one o'clock by Rosamond's pond, that I may see her before she returns to her lady; and as you tender your ears be secret. [*Exit Footman.*

FAINALL *enters.*

Fain. Joy of your success, Mirabell! You look pleased.

Mira. Ay; I have been engaged in a matter of some sort of mirth, which is not yet ripe for discovery. I am glad this is not a cabal-night. I wonder, Fainall, that you who are married, and of consequence should be discreet, will suffer your wife to be of such a party.

Fain. Faith, I am not jealous. Besides, most who are engaged are women and relations; and for the men, they are of a kind too contemptible to give scandal.

Mira. I am of another opinion. The greater the coxcomb, always the more the scandal; for a woman who is not a fool can have but one reason for associating with a man who is one.

Fain. Are you jealous as often as you see Witwould entertain'd by Millamant?

Mira. Of her understanding I am, if not of her person.

Fain. You do her wrong; for, to give her her due, she has wit.

Mira. She has beauty enough to make any man think so; and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so.

Fain. For a passionate lover, methinks, you are a man somewhat too discerning in the failings of your mistress.

Mira. And for a discerning man, somewhat too passionate a lover; for I like her with all her faults; nay, like her for her faults. Her follies are so natural, or so artful, that they become her; and those affectations, which in another woman would be odious, serve but to make her more agreeable.—I'll tell thee, Fainall, she once used me with that insolence, that, in revenge, I took her to pieces, sifted her, and separated her failings; I studied 'em, and got 'em by rote. The catalogue was so large, that I was not without hopes, one day or other, to hate her heartily: to which end I so used myself to think of 'em, that at length, contrary to my design and expectation, they gave me every hour less disturbance; till in a few days it became habitual to me to remember 'em without being displeased. They are now grown as familiar to me as my own frailties; and, in all probability, in a little time longer I shall like 'em as well.

Fain. Marry her, marry her; be half as well acquainted with her charms as you are with her defects, and my life on't you are your own man again.

Mira. Say you so?

Fain. Ay, ay, I have experience; I have a wife, and so forth.

A Messenger enters.

Mess. Is one 'Squire Witwould here?

Betty. Yes; what's your business?

Mess. I have a letter for him, from his brother, Sir Wilful, which I am charged to deliver into his own hands.

Betty. He's in the next room, friend.—That way. [*Exit Messenger.*

Mira. What, is the chief of that noble family in town, Sir Wilful Witwould?

Fain. He is expected to-day.—Do you know him?

Mira. I have seen him; he promises to be an extraordinary person. I think you have the honour to be related to him.

Fain. Yes; he is half-brother to this Witwould, by a former wife, who was sister to my Lady Wishfort, my wife's mother. If you marry Millamant, you must call cousins too.

Mira. I would rather be his relation than his acquaintance.

Fain. He comes to town in order to equip himself for travel.

Mira. For travel! Why, the man that I mean is above forty.

Fain. No matter for that; 'tis for the honour of England, that all Europe should know we have blockheads of all ages.

Mira. I wonder there is not an act of parliament to save the credit of the nation, and prohibit the exportation of fools.

Fain. By no means; 'tis better as 'tis: 'tis better to trade with little loss, than to be quite eaten up with being overstock'd.

Mira. Pray, are the follies of this knight-errant and those of the 'squire his brother any thing related?

Fain. Not at all; Witwould grows by the knight, like a medlar grafted on a crab: one will melt in your mouth, and t'other set your teeth on edge; one is all pulp, and the other all core.

Mira. So one will be rotten before he be ripe; and the other will be rotten without ever being ripe at all.

Fain. Sir Wilful is an odd mixture of bashfulness and obstinacy. But when he's drunk, he's as loving as the monster in the Tempest, and much after the same manner. To give t'other his due, he has something of good-nature, and does not always want wit.

Mira. Not always; but as often as his memory fails him, and his common-place of comparisons. He is a fool with a good memory, and some few scraps of other folks' wit. He is one whose conversation can never be approved; yet it is now and then to be endured. He has indeed one good quality—he is not exceptious; for he so passionately affects the reputation of understanding raillery, that he will construe an affront into a jest, and call downright rudeness and ill language satire and fire.

Fain. If you have a mind to finish his picture, you have an opportunity to do it in full length. —Behold the original!

WITWOULD *enters.*

Wit. Afford me your compassion, my dears: pity me, Fainall; Mirabell, pity me.

Mira. I do from my soul.

Fain. Why, what's the matter?

Wit. No letters for me, Betty?

Betty. Did not a messenger bring you one but now, sir?

Wit. Ay; but no other?

Betty. No, sir.

Wit. That's hard, that's very hard——A messenger! A mule, a beast of burden!—He has brought me a letter from the fool my brother, as heavy as a panegyric in a funeral sermon, or a copy of commendatory verses from one poet to another. And what's worse, 'tis as sure a forerunner of the author, as an epistle dedicatory!

Mira. A fool, and your brother, Witwould?

Wit. Ay, ay, my half-brother. My half-brother, he is no nearer, upon honour.

Mira, Then 'tis possible he may be but half a fool.

Wit. Good, good, Mirabell, *le Drole!* Good, good; hang him, don't let's talk of him:—Fainall, how does your lady? Gad, I say any thing in the world to get this fellow out of my head. I beg pardon that I should ask a man of pleasure, and the town, a question at once so foreign and domestic. But I talk like an old maid at a marriage; I don't know what I say:—but she's the best woman in the world.

Fain. 'Tis well you don't know what you say, or else your commendation would go near to make me either vain or jealous.

Wit. No man in town lives well with a wife but Fainall. Your judgment, Mirabell.

Mira. You had better step and ask his wife, if you would be credibly informed.

Wit. Mirabell.

Mira. Ay.

Wit. My dear, I ask ten thousand pardons: ———gad, I have forgot what I was going to say to you.

Mira. I thank you heartily, heartily.

Wit. No, but pr'ythee excuse me—my memory is such a memory.

Mira. Have a care of such apologies, Witwould:—for I never knew a fool but he affected to complain either of the spleen, or his memory.

Fain. What have you done with Petulant?

Wit. He's reckoning his money,—my money it was—I have had no luck to-day.

Fain. You may allow him to win of you at play; for you are sure to be too hard for him at repartee:—Since you monopolize the wit that is between you, the fortune must be his of course.

Mira. I don't find that Petulant confesses the superiority of wit to be your talent, Witwould.

Wit. Come, come, you are malicious now, and would breed debates——Petulant's my friend, and a very pretty fellow, and a very honest fellow, and has a smattering—faith and troth a pretty deal of an odd sort of a small wit; nay, I do him justice, I'm his friend, I won't wrong him; and if he had any judgment in the world, he would not be altogether contemptible. Come, come, don't detract from the merits of my friend.

Fain. You don't take your friend to be over nicely bred.

Wit. No, no, hang him, the rogue has no manners at all, that I must own—No more breeding than a bum-bailiff, that I grant you—'Tis a pity; the fellow has fire and life.

Mira. What, courage?

Wit. Hum, faith I don't know as to that, I cann't say as to that.——Yes, faith, in controversy, he'll contradict any body.

Mira. Though 'twere a man whom he feared, or a woman whom he loved.

Wit. Well, well, he does not always think before he speaks; we have all our failings:—you are too hard upon him, you are, faith. Let me excuse him.—I can defend most of his faults, except one or two;—one he has, that's the truth on't; if he were my brother I could not acquit him—that, indeed, I could wish were otherwise.

Mira. Ay, marry, what's that, Witwould?

Wit. O pardon me—expose the infirmities of my friend!—No, my dear, excuse me there.

Fain. What, I warrant he's insincere, or 'tis some such trifle.

Wit, No, no; what if he be? 'tis no matter for that, his wit will excuse that: a wit should no more be sincere, than a woman constant; one argues a decay of parts, as t'other of beauty.

Mira. May be you think him too positive?

Wit. No, no; his being positive is an incentive to argument, and keeps up conversation.

Fain. Too illiterate.

Wit. That! that's his happiness; his want of learning gives him the more opportunity to shew his natural parts.

Mira. He wants words.

Wit. Ay; but I like him for that now; for his want of words gives me the pleasure very often to explain his meaning.

Fain. He's impudent.

Wit. No, that's not it.

Mira. Vain?

Wit. No.

Mira. What, he speaks unseasonable truths sometimes, because he has not wit enough to invent an evasion?

Wit. Truth! ha, ha, ha! No, no; since you will have it—I mean, he never speaks truth at all, that's all. He will lie like a chambermaid, or a woman of quality's porter. Now that is a fault.

A Coachman enters.

Coach. Is Master Petulant here, mistress?

Betty. Yes.

Coach. Three gentlewomen in a coach would speak with him.

Fain. O brave Petulant! three!

Betty. I'll tell him.

Coach. You must bring two dishes of chocolate and a glass of cinnamon water.

[*Exeunt Coachman and* BETTY.

Wit. That should be for two fasting *bona robas*, and a procuress troubled with wind. Now you may know what the three are.

Mira. You are very free with your friend's acquaintance.

Wit. Ay, ay, friendship without freedom is as dull as love without enjoyment, or wine without toasting; but, to tell you a secret, these are trulls whom he allows coach-hire, and something more, by the week, to call on him once a day at public places.

Mira. How!

Wit. You shall see he won't go to 'em, because there's no more company here to take notice of him. Why this is nothing to what he used to do: before he found out this way, I have known him to call for himself.

Fain. Call for himself! What dost thou mean?

Wit. Mean? why he would slip you out of this chocolate-house, just when you had been talking to him. As soon as your back was turn'd—whip he was gone; then trip to his lodging, clap on a hood and scarf, and a mask, slip into a hackney coach, and drive hither to the door again in a trice; where he would send in for himself, that is, I mean, call for himself, wait for himself, nay, and what's more, not finding himself, sometimes leave a letter for himself.

Mira. I confess this is something extraordinary—I believe he waits for himself now, he is so long a-coming. O, I ask his pardon.

PETULANT *and* BETTY *enter.*

Betty. Sir, the coach stays.

Pet. Well, well, I come.—'Sbud, a man had as good be a professed midwife, as a professed gallant, at this rate; to be knocked up, and raised at all hours, and in all places. Deuce on 'em, I won't come—D'ye hear, tell 'em I won't come ——Let 'em snivel and cry their hearts out.

[*Exit* BETTY.

Fain. You are very cruel, Petulant.

Pet. All's one, let it pass——I have a humour to be cruel.

Mira. I hope they are not persons of condition that you use at this rate.

Pet. Condition! condition's a dried fig, if I am not in humour—By this hand, if they were your —a—a—your what-d'ye-call-'ems themselves, they must wait or rub off, if I am not in the vein.

Mira. What-d'ye-call-'ems! what are they, Witwould?

Wit. Empresses, my dear——By your what-d'ye-call-'ems he means sultana queens.

Pet. Ay, Roxalanas.

Mira. Cry you mercy.

Fain. Witwould says they are——

Pet. What does he say they are?

Wit. I? fine ladies I say.

Pet. Pass on, Witwould—Hark'e, by this light, his relations—Two co-heiresses his cousins, and an old aunt, who loves intriguing better than a conventicle.

Wit. Ha, ha, ha! I had a mind to see how the rogue would come off—Ha, ha, ha! gad I cann't be angry with him, if he had said they were my mother and my sisters.

Mira. No?

Wit. No; the rogue's wit and readiness of invention charm me.—Dear Petulant!

BETTY *enters.*

Betty. They are gone, sir, in great anger.

Pet. Enough, let 'em trundle. Anger helps complexion, saves paint.

Fain. This continence is all dissembled; this is in order to have something to brag of the next time he makes court to Millamant, and swear he has abandoned the whole sex for her sake.

Mira. Have you not left off your impudent pretensions there yet? I shall cut your throat some time or other, Petulant, about that business.

Pet. Ay, ay, let that pass——There are other throats to be cut.

Mira. Meaning mine, sir?

Pet. Not I—I mean nobody—I know nothing ——But there are uncles and nephews in the world—And they may be rivals—What then, all's one for that—

Mira. Now, hark'e, Petulant, come hither—Explain, or I shall call your interpreter.

Pet. Explain! I know nothing—Why you have an uncle, have you not, lately come to town, and lodges by my Lady Wishfort's?

Mira. True.

Pet. Why, that's enough—You and he are not friends: and, if he should marry and have a child, you may be disinherited, ha?

Mira. Where hast thou stumbled upon all this truth?

Pet. All's one for that; why then, say I know something.

Mira. Come, thou art an honest fellow, Petulant, and shalt make love to my mistress, thou shalt, faith. What hast thou heard of my uncle?

Pet. I! nothing; I! If throats are to be cut, let swords clash; snug's the word; I shrug and am silent.

Mira. O raillery, raillery! Come, I know thou art in the women's secrets—What, you're a cabalist; I know you staid at Millamant's last night, after I went. Was there any mention made of my uncle or me? tell me. If thou hast but good-nature equal to thy wit, Petulant, Tony Witwould, who is now thy competitor in fame, would shew as dim by thee as a dead whiting's eye by a pearl of orient; he would no more be seen by thee, than Mercury is by the sun. Come, I'm sure thou wo't tell me.

Pet. If I do, will you grant me common sense then, for the future?

Mira. Faith I'll do what I can for thee, and I'll pray that it may be granted thee in the mean time.

Pet. Well, hark'e. [*They talk apart.*

Fain. Petulant and you both will find Mirabell as warm a rival as a lover.

Wit. Pshaw, pshaw! that she laughs at Petulant is plain. And for my part—But that it is almost a fashion to admire her, I should—Hark'e—To tell you a secret, but let it go no farther—Between friends, I shall never break my heart for her.

Fain. How!

Wit. She's handsome; but she's a sort of an uncertain woman.

Fain. I thought you had died for her.

Wit. Umph——No.

Fain. She has wit.

Wit. 'Tis what she will hardly allow any body else. Now, I should hate that, if she were as handsome as Cleopatra. Mirabell is not so sure of her as he thinks for.

Fain. Why do you think so?

Wit. We staid pretty late there last night, and heard something of an uncle to Mirabell, who is lately come to town, and is between him and the best part of his estate. Mirabell and he are at some distance, as my lady Wishfort has been told; and you know she hates Mirabell worse than a quaker hates a parrot, or than a fishmonger hates a hard frost. Whether this uncle has seen Mrs Millamant or not, I cannot say; but there were items of such a treaty being in embryo; and if it should come to life, poor Mirabell would be in some sort unfortunately fobbed, i'faith.

Fain. 'Tis impossible Millamant should hearken to it.

Wit. Faith, my dear, I cann't tell; she's a woman, and a kind of an humourist.

Mira. And this is the sum of what you could collect last night?

Pet. The quintessence. May be Witwould knows more, he staid longer—Besides, they never mind him, they say any thing before him.

Mira. I thought you had been the greatest favourite.

Pet. Ay, tête-a-tête, but not in public, because I make remarks.

Mira. You do?

Pet. Ay, ay; I'm malicious, man. Now he's soft, you know; they are not in awe of him—— The fellow's well-bred; he's what you call a—what-d'ye-call-'em, a fine gentleman; but he's silly withal.

Mira. I thank you, I know as much as my curiosity requires. Fainall, are you for the Mall?

Fain. Ay, I'll take a turn before dinner.

Wit. Ay, we'll all walk in the Park; the ladies talk of being there.

Mira. I thought you were obliged to watch for your brother Sir Wilful's arrival.

Wit. No, no; he comes to his aunt's, my Lady Wishfort's; plague on him, I shall be troubled with him too; what shall I do with the fool?

Pet. Beg him for his estate, that I may beg you afterwards; and so have but one trouble with you both.

Wit. O rare Petulant, thou art as quick as fire in a frosty morning; thou shalt to the Mall with us, and we'll be very severe.

Pet. Enough; I am in a humour to be severe.

Mira. Are you? Pray then walk by yourselves. Let not us be accessary to your putting the ladies out of countenance with your senseless ribaldry, which you roar out aloud as often as they pass by you; and, when you have made a handsome woman blush, then you think you have been severe.

Pet. What, what! Then let 'em either shew their innocence by not understanding what they hear, or else shew their discretion by not hearing what they would not be thought to understand.

Mira. But hast not thou then sense enough to know, that thou ought'st to be most ashamed thyself when thou hast put another out of countenance?

Pet. Not I, by this hand. I always take blushing either for a sign of guilt or ill-breeding.

Mira. I confess you ought to think so. You are in the right, that you may plead the error of your judgment in defence of your practice.

Where modesty's ill-manners, 'tis but fit
That impudence and malice pass for wit.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*St James's Park.*

Mrs FAINALL *and Mrs* MARWOOD *enter.*

Mrs Fain. Ay, ay, dear Marwood, if we will be happy, we must find the means in ourselves, and among ourselves. Men are ever in extremes, either doting or averse. While they are lovers, if they have fire and sense, their jealousies are insupportable: and when they cease to love, we ought to think at least they loath: they look upon us with horror and distaste; they meet us like the ghosts of what we were, and, as from such, fly from us.

Mrs Mar. True, 'tis an unhappy circumstance of life, that love should ever die before us; and that the man so often should outlive the lover. But, say what you will, 'tis better to be left than never to have been loved. To pass our youth in dull indifference, to refuse the sweets of life because they once must leave us, is as preposterous as to wish to have been born old, because we one day must be old. For my part, my youth may wear and waste, but it shall never rust in my possession.

Mrs Fain. Then it seems you dissemble an aversion to mankind, only in compliance to my mother's humour?

Mrs Mar. Certainly. To be free; I have no taste of those insipid, dry discourses, with which our sex of force must entertain themselves apart from men. We may affect endearments to each other, profess eternal friendships, and seem to dote like lovers, but 'tis not in our natures long to persevere. Love will resume his empire in our breasts, and every heart, or soon or late, receive and re-admit him as its lawful tyrant.

Mrs Fain. Bless me, how have I been deceived? Why, you're a professed libertine.

Mrs Mar. You see my friendship by my freedom. Come, be as sincere, acknowledge that your sentiments agree with mine.

Mrs Fain. Never.

Mrs Mar. You hate mankind?

Mrs Fain. Heartily, inveterately.

Mrs Mar. Your husband?

Mrs Fain. Most transcendently; ay, though I say it, meritoriously.

Mrs Mar. Give me your hand upon it.

Mrs Fain. There.

Mrs Mar. I join with you; what I have said has been to try you.

Mrs Fain. Is it possible? Dost thou hate those vipers men?

Mrs Mar. I have done hating 'em, and am now come to despise 'em. The next thing I have to do, is eternally to forget them.

Mrs Fain. There spoke the spirit of an Amazon, a Penthesilea.

Mrs Mar. And yet I am thinking sometimes to carry my aversion farther.

Mrs Fain. How?

Mrs Mar. By marrying; if I could but find one that loved me very well, and would be thoroughly sensible of ill usage, I think I should do myself the violence of undergoing the ceremony.

Mrs Fain. You would not dishonour him?

Mrs Mar. No: but I'd make him believe I did, and that's as bad.

Mrs Fain. Why had you not as good do it?

Mrs Mar. O if he should ever discover it, he would then know the worst, and be out of his pain; but I would have him ever to continue upon the rack of fear and jealousy.

Mrs Fain. Ingenious mischief! would thou wert married to Mirabell!

Mrs Mar. Would I were.

Mrs Fain. You change colour.

Mrs Mar. Because I hate him.

Mrs Fain. So do I; but I can bear him named. —But what reason have you to hate him in particular?

Mrs Mar. I never loved him; he is, and always was, insufferably proud.

Mrs Fain. By the reason you give for your aversion, one would think it dissembled; for you have laid a fault to his charge, of which his enemies must acquit him.

Mrs Mar. O, then it seems you are one of his favourable enemies. Methinks you look a little pale, and now you flush again.

Mrs Fain. Do I? I think I am a little sick o' the sudden.

Mrs Mar. What ails you?

Mrs Fain. My husband. Don't you see him? He turned short upon me unawares, and has almost overcome me.

FAINALL *and* MIRABELL *enter.*

Mrs Mar. Ha, ha, ha! he comes opportunely for you.

Mrs Fain. For you, for he has brought Mirabell with him.

Fain. My dear!

Mrs Fain. My soul!

Fain. You don't look well to-day, child.

Mrs Fain. D'ye think so?

Mira. He's the only man that does, madam.

Mrs Fain. The only man that would tell me so at least; and the only man from whom I could hear it without mortification.

Fain. O, my dear, I am satisfied of your tenderness; I know you cannot resent any thing from me; especially what is an effect of my concern.

Mrs Fain. Mr Mirabell, my mother interrupted you in a pleasant relation last night; I could fain hear it out.

Mira. The persons concerned in this affair, have yet a tolerable reputation. I am afraid Mr Fainall will be censorious.

Mrs Fain. He has a humour more prevailing than his curiosity, and will willingly dispense with the hearing of one scandalous story, to avoid giving an occasion to make another, by being seen to walk with his wife. This way, Mr Mirabell, and I dare promise you will oblige us both.

[*Exeunt Mrs* FAINALL *and* MIRABELL.

Fain. Excellent creature! Well, sure, if I should live to be rid of my wife, I should be a miserable man.

Mrs Mar. Ay!

Fain. For, having only that one hope, the accomplishment of it, of consequence, must put an end to all my hopes; and what a wretch is he who must survive his hopes! Nothing remains when that day comes, but to sit down and weep like Alexander, when he wanted other worlds to conquer.

Mrs Mar. Will you not follow 'em?

Fain. No, I think not.

Mrs Mar. Pray let us; I have a reason.

Fain. You are not jealous?

Mrs Mar. Of whom?

Fain. Of Mirabell.

Mrs Mar. If I am, is it inconsistent with my love to you, that I am tender of your honour?

Fain. You would intimate then, as if there were a particular understanding between my wife and him?

Mrs Mar. I think she does not hate him to that degree she would be thought.

Fain. But he, I fear, is too insensible.

Mrs Mar. It may be that you are deceived.

Fain. It may be so. I do not now begin to apprehend it.

Mrs Mar. What?

Fain. That I have been deceived, madam, and you are false.

Mrs Mar. That I am false! What mean you?

Fain. To let you know, I see through all your little arts——Come, you both love him; and both have equally dissembled your aversion. Your mutual jealousies of one another have made you clash till you have both struck fire. I have seen the warm confession reddening on your cheeks and sparkling from your eyes.

Mrs Mar. You do me wrong.

Fain. I do not——'Twas for my ease to oversee and wilfully neglect the gross advances made him by my wife; that, by permitting her to be engaged, I might continue unsuspected in my pleasures, and take you oftener to my arms in full security. But could you think, because the nodding husband would not wake, that e'er the watchful lover slept?

Mrs Mar. And wherewithal can you reproach me?

Fain. With infidelity, with loving another, with love of Mirabell.

Mrs Mar. 'Tis false! I challenge you to shew an instance that can confirm your groundless accusation. I hate him.

Fain. And wherefore do you hate him? He is insensible, and your resentment follows his neglect. An instance! The injuries you have done him are a proof: your interposing in his love.—What cause had you to make discoveries of his pretended passion? to undeceive the credulous aunt, and be the officious obstacle of his match with Millamant?

Mrs Mar. My obligations to my lady urged me: I had professed a friendship to her, and could not see her easy nature so abused by that dissembler.

Fain. What, was it conscience then? Professed a friendship! O, the pious friendships of the female sex!

Mrs Mar. More tender, more sincere, and more enduring, than all the vain and empty vows of men, whether professing love to us, or mutual faith to one another.

Fain. Ha, ha, ha! you are my wife's friend too.

Mrs Mar. Shame and ingratitude! Do you reproach me? You, you upbraid me? Have I been false to her through strict fidelity to you, and sacrificed my friendship to keep my love inviolate, and have you the baseness to charge me with the guilt, unmindful of the merit? To you it should be meritorious, that I have been vicious, and do you reflect that guilt upon me which should lie buried in your bosom?

Fain. You misinterpret my reproof. I meant but to remind you of the slight account you once could make of strictest ties, when set in competition with your love to me.

Mrs Mar. 'Tis false; you urged it with deliberate malice—'Twas spoke in scorn, and I never will forgive it.

Fain. Your guilt, not your resentment, begets your rage. If yet you loved, you could forgive a jealousy: but you are stung to find you are discovered.

Mrs Mar. It shall be all discovered. You too shall be discovered; be sure you shall. I can but be exposed—If I do it myself, I shall prevent your baseness.

Fain. Why, what will you do?

Mrs Mar. Disclose it to your wife; own what has past between us.

Fain. Frenzy!

Mrs Mar. By all my wrongs I'll do't—I'll publish to the world the injuries you have done me, both in my fame and fortune; with both I trusted you! you, bankrupt in honour, as indigent of wealth!

Fain. Your fame I have preserved. Your fortune has been bestowed as the prodigality of your love would have it, in pleasures which we both have shared. Yet, had not you been false, I had ere this repaid it—'Tis true—had you permitted Mirabell with Millamant to have stolen their marriage, my lady had been incensed beyond all means of reconcilement; Millamant had forfeited the moiety of her fortune, which then would have descended to my wife—And wherefore did I marry, but to make lawful prize of a

rich widow's wealth, and squander it on love and you?

Mrs Mar. Deceit and frivolous pretence!

Fain. Death! am I not married? what's pretence? Am I not imprisoned, fettered? have I not a wife? nay, a wife that was a widow, a young widow, a handsome widow; and would be again a widow, but that I have a heart of proof, and something of a constitution to bustle through the ways of wedlock and this world. Will you be reconciled to truth and me?

Mrs Mar. Impossible. Truth and you are inconsistent—I hate you, and shall for ever.

Fain. For loving you?

Mrs Mar. I loath the name of love after such usage; and, next to the guilt with which you would asperse me, I scorn you most. Farewell.

Fain. Nay, we must not part thus.

Mrs Mar. Let me go.

Fain. Come, I'm sorry.

Mrs Mar. I care not—Let me go—Break my hands, do—I'd leave 'em to get loose.

Fain. I would not hurt you for the world.—Have I no other hold to keep you here?

Mrs Mar. Well, I have deserved it all.

Fain. You know I love you.

Mrs Mar. Poor dissembling! O that—Well, it is not yet——

Fain. What, what is it not? what is not yet? is it not yet too late——

Mrs Mar. No, it is not yet too late—I have that comfort.

Fain. It is, to love another.

Mrs Mar. But not to loath, detest, abhor mankind, myself, and the whole treacherous world.

Fain. Nay, this is extravagance—Come, I ask your pardon—No tears—I was to blame, I could not love you, and be easy in my doubts—Pray, forbear—I believe you; I'm convinced I've done you wrong; and any way, every way, will make amends;—I'll hate my wife yet more, damn her, I'll part with her, rob her of all she's worth, and we'll retire somewhere, any where, to another world—I'll marry thee—Be pacified—'Sdeath! they come—hide your face, your tears—You have a mask, wear it a moment. This way, this way, be persuaded. [*Exeunt.*

MIRABELL *and Mrs* FAINALL *enter.*

Mrs Fain. They are here yet.

Mira. They are turning into the other walk.

Mrs Fain. While I only hated my husband, I could bear to see him; but, since I have despised him, he's too offensive.

Mira. O you should hate with prudence.

Mrs Fain. Yes, for I have loved with indiscretion.

Mira. You should have just so much disgust for your husband, as may be sufficient to make you relish your lover.

Mrs Fain. You have been the cause that I have loved without bounds; and would you set limits to that aversion, of which you have been the occasion? why did you make me marry this man?

Mira. Why do we daily commit disagreeable and dangerous actions? To save that idol reputation. If the familiarities of our loves had produced that consequence, of which you were apprehensive, where could you have fixed a father's name with credit, but on a husband? I knew Fainall to be a man lavish of his morals, an interested and professing friend, a false and a designing lover; yet one whose wit and outward fair behaviour have gained a reputation with the town, enough to make that woman stand excused, who has suffered herself to be won by his addresses. A better man ought not to have been sacrificed to the occasion; a worse had not answered to the purpose. When you are weary of him, you know your remedy.

Mrs Fain. I ought to stand in some degree of credit with you, Mirabell.

Mira. In justice to you, I have made you privy to my whole design, and put it in your power to ruin or advance my fortune.

Mrs Fain. Whom have you instructed to represent your pretended uncle?

Mira. Waitwell, my servant.

Mrs Fain. He is an humble servant to Foible, my mother's woman, and may win her to your interest.

Mira. Care is taken for that—she is won and wom by this time. They were married this morning.

Mrs Fain. Who?

Mira. Waitwell and Foible. I would not tempt my servant to betray me by trusting him too far. If your mother, in hopes to ruin me, should consent to marry my pretended uncle, he might, like Mosca in the Fox, stand upon terms; so I made him sure before-hand.

Mrs Fain. So, if my poor mother is caught in a contract, you will discover the imposture betimes, and release her, by producing a certificate of her gallant's former marriage.

Mira. Yes, upon condition that she consents to my marriage with her niece, and surrender the moiety of her fortune in her possession.

Mrs Fain. She talked last night of endeavouring at a match between Millamant and your uncle.

Mira. That was by Foible's direction and my instruction, that she might seem to carry it more privately.

Mrs Fain. Well, I have an opinion of your success; for I believe my lady will do any thing to get a husband; and when she has this, which you have provided for her, I suppose she will submit to any thing to get rid of him.

Mira. Yes, I think the good lady would marry any thing that resembled a man, though 'twere no more than what a butler could pinch out of a napkin.

Mrs Fain. Female frailty! we must all come to it, if we live to be old, and feel the craving of a false appetite when the true is decayed.

Mira. An old woman's appetite is depraved like that of a girl!—'tis the green-sickness of a second childhood: and, like the faint offer of a

latter spring, serves but to usher in the fall; and withers in an affected bloom.

Mrs Fain. Here's your mistress.

Mrs MILLAMANT, WITWOULD, *and* MINCING *enter.*

Mira. Here she comes i'faith, full sail, with her fan spread and streamers out, and a shoal of fools for tenders—Ha, no; I cry her mercy.

Mrs Fain. I see but one poor empty sculler, and he tows her woman after him.

Mira. You seem to be unattended, madam.—You used to have the *beau monde* throng after you, and a flock of gay fine perukes hovering round you.

Wit. Like moths about a candle—I had like to have lost my comparison for want of breath.

Mill. O, I have denied myself air to-day. I have walked as fast through the crowd——

Wit. As a favourite just disgraced; and with as few followers.

Mill. Dear Mr Witwould, truce with your similitudes, for I am as sick of 'em——

Wit. As a physician of a good air—I cannot help it, madam, though 'tis against myself.

Mill. Yet again! Mincing, stand between me and his wit.

Wit. Do, Mrs Mincing, like a screen before a great fire. I confess I do blaze to-day; I am too bright.

Mrs Fain. But, dear Millamant, why were you so long?

Mill. Long! lud! have I not made violent haste? I have asked every living thing I met for you; I have enquired after you as after a new fashion.

Wit. Madam, truce with your similitudes—no, you met her husband, and did not ask him for her.

Mira. By your leave, Witwould, that were like inquiring after an old fashion, to ask a husband for his wife.

Wit. Hum! a hit, a hit, a palpable hit, I confess it.

Min. You were dressed before I came abroad.

Mill. Ay, that's true—O but then I had—— Mincing, what had I? why was I so long?

Min. O mem, your lashp staid to peruse a pacquet of letters.

Mill. O ay, letters—I had letters—I am persecuted with letters—I hate letters—nobody knows how to write letters; and yet one has 'em, one does not know why—they serve one to pin up one's hair.

Wit. Is that the way? Pray, madam, do you pin up your hair with all your letters? I find I must keep copies.

Mill. Only with those in verse, Mr Witwould. I never pin up my hair with prose. I think, I tried once, Mincing?

Min. O mem, I shall never forget it.

Mill. Ay, poor Mincing tift and tift all the morning.

Min. Till I had the cramp in my fingers, I'll vow, mem, and all to no purpose. But when your lashp pins it up with poetry, it sits so pleasant the next day as any thing, and is so pure, and so crips

Wit. Indeed, so crips?

Min. You're such a critic, Mr Witwould.

Mill. Mincing, did you take exceptions last night? O ay, and went away—Now I think on't, I'm angry—No, now I think on't, I'm pleased—For I believe I gave you some pain.

Mira. Does that please you?

Mill. Infinitely; I love to give pain.

Mira. You would affect a cruelty which is not in your nature; your true vanity is in the power of pleasing.

Mill. O, I ask your pardon for that—One's cruelty is one's power, and when one parts with one's cruelty one parts with one's power; and when one has parted with that, I fancy one's old and ugly.

Mira. Ay, ay, suffer your cruelty to ruin the object of your power, to destroy your love—And then, how vain, how lost a thing you'll be! Nay, 'tis true: you are no longer handsome when you have lost your lover; your beauty dies upon the instant: for beauty is the lover's gift; 'tis he bestows your charms——Your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old, whom the looking-glass mortifies, yet, after commendation, can be flattered by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises rather than our faces.

Mill. O the vanity of these men! Fainall, d'ye hear him? If they did not commend us we were not handsome! Now you must know they could not commend one, if one was not handsome. Beauty is the lover's gift!——Dear me, what is it that a lover can give?—Why, one makes lovers as fast as one pleases, and they live as long as one pleases, and they die as soon as one pleases; and then, if one pleases, one makes more.

Wit. Very pretty. Why, you make no more of making of lovers, madam, than of making so many card-matches.

Mill. One no more owes one's beauty to a lover, than one's wit to an echo: they can but reflect what we look and say; vain, empty things, if we are silent or unseen, and want a being.

Mira. Yet, to those two vain empty things, you owe two of the greatest pleasures of your life.

Mill. How so?

Mira. To your lover you owe the pleasure of hearing yourselves praised; and to an echo the pleasure of hearing yourselves talk.

Wit. But I know a lady that loves talking so incessantly, she won't give an echo fair play; she has that everlasting rotation of tongue, that an echo must wait till she dies, before it can catch her last words.

Mill. O, fiction! Fainall, let us leave these men.

Mira. Draw off Witwould.

[*Aside to Mrs* FAINALL.

Mrs Fain. Immediately:—I have a word or two for Mr Witwould.

[*Exeunt Mrs* FAINALL *and* WITWOULD.

Mira. I would beg a little private audience

too——You had the tyranny to deny me last night, though you knew I came to impart a secret to you that concerned my love.

Mill. You saw I was engaged.

Mira. Unkind. You had the leisure to entertain a herd of fools; things who visit you from their excessive idleness; bestowing on your easiness that time, which is the incumbrance of their lives. How can you find delight in such society? It is impossible they should admire you, they are not capable; or, if they were, it should be to you as a mortification; for sure to please a fool is some degree of folly.

Mill. I please myself——Besides, sometimes to converse with fools is for my health.

Mira. Your health! Is there a worse disease than the conversation of fools?

Mill. Yes, the vapours; fools are physic for it, next to assafœtida.

Mira. You are not in a course of fools?

Mill. Mirabell, if you persist in this offensive freedom, you'll displease me—I think I must resolve, after all, not to have you——We sha'n't agree.

Mira. Not in your physic, it may be.

Mill. And yet your distemper, in all likelihood, will be the same; for we all shall be sick of one another. I sha'n't endure to be reprimanded, nor instructed; 'tis so dull to act always by advice, and so tedious to be told of one's faults——I cann't bear it. Well, I won't have you, Mirabell——I'm resolved——I think——You may go——Ha, ha, ha! What would you give that you could help loving me?

Mira. I would give something that you did not know I could not help it.

Mill. Come don't look grave then. Well, what do you say to me?

Mira. I say that a man may as soon make a friend by his wit, or a fortune by his honesty, as win a woman with plain dealing and sincerity.

Mill. Sententious Mirabell! Pr'ythee don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging.

Mira. You are merry, madam; but I would persuade you for a moment to be serious.

Mill. What, with that face? No, if you keep your countenance, 'tis impossible I should hold mine. Well, after all, there is something very moving in a love-sick face. Ha, ha, ha! Well, I won't laugh, don't be peevish——Heigho! Now I'll be melancholy, as melancholy as a watch-light. Well, Mirabell, if ever you would win me, woo me now——Nay, if you are so tedious, fare you well: I see they are walking away.

Mira. Can you not find, in the variety of your disposition, one moment——

Mill. To hear you tell me Foible's married, and your plot like to speed?——No.

Mira. But how you come to know it——

Mill. Without the help of conjuration you cann't imagine, unless she should tell me herself. Which of the two it may have been, I will leave you to consider; and when you have done thinking of that, think of me.

[*Exeunt* MILLAMANT *and* MINCING.

Mira. I have something more—Gone——Think of you! to think of a whirlwind, though 'twere in a whirlwind, were a case of more steady contemplation; a very tranquillity of mind and mansion. A fellow that lives in a windmill, has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn, and by which they are not turned; and by one as well as another; for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct—O here comes my pair of turtles—What, billing so sweetly! is not Valentine's day over with you yet?

WAITWELL *and* FOIBLE *enter.*

Sirrah, Waitwell, why sure you think you were married for your own recreation, and not for my conveniency.

Wait. Your pardon, sir. With submission, we have indeed been billing; but still with an eye to business, sir; I have instructed her as well as I could. If she can take your directions as readily as my instructions, sir, your affairs are in a prosperous way.

Mira. Give you joy, Mrs Foible.

Foi. O las, sir, I'm so ashamed——I'm afraid my lady has been in a thousand inquietudes for me; but I protest, sir, I made as much haste as I could.

Wait. That she did indeed, sir. It was my fault that she did not make more.

Mira. That I believe.

Foi. I told my lady, as you instructed me, sir, that I had a prospect of seeing Sir Rowland your uncle; and that I would put her ladyship's picture in my pocket to shew him; which, I'll be sure to say, has made him so enamour'd of her beauty, that he burns with impatience to lie at her ladyship's feet, and worship the original.

Mira. Excellent Foible! Matrimony has made you eloquent in love.

Wait. I think she has profited, sir, I think so.

Foi. You have seen madam Millamant, sir?

Mira. Yes.

Foi. I told her, sir, because I did not know that you might find an opportunity, she had so much company last night.

Mira. Your diligence will merit more—in the mean time—— [*Gives money.*

Foi. O, dear sir, your humble servant.

Wait. Spouse.

Mira. Stand off, sir, not a penny——Go on and prosper, Foible——The lease shall be made good, and the farm stock'd, if we succeed.

Foi. I don't question your generosity, sir; and you need not doubt of success. If you have no more commands, sir, I'll be gone; I'm sure my lady is at her toilet, and cann't dress till I come.

——O dear, I'm sure that [*Looking out.*] was Mrs Marwood that went by in a mask; if she has seen me with you, I'm sure she'll tell my lady. I'll make haste home and prevent her. Your servant, sir. B'w'ye, Waitwell. [*Exit.*

Wait. Sir Rowland, if you please. The jade's so pert upon her preferment, she forgets herself.

Mira. Come, sir, will you endeavour to forget yourself, and transform into Sir Rowland?

Wait. Why, sir, it will be impossible I should remember myself.—[*Exit* MIRABELL.] Married, knighted, and attended, all in one day! 'tis enough to make any man forget himself. The difficulty will be how to recover my acquaintance and familiarity with my former self; and fall from my transformation to a reformation into Waitwell. Nay, I sha'n't be quite the same Waitwell neither; for now I remember, I'm married, and cann't be my own again.

Ay, there's my grief; that's the sad change of life;
To lose my title, and yet keep my wife. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in Lady* WISHFORT'S *House.*

Lady WISHFORT *at her Toilet,* PEG *waiting.*

L. Wish. Merciful! no news of Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam.

L. Wish. I have no more patience—If I have not fretted myself till I am pale again, there's no veracity in me. Fetch me the red——the red, do you hear, sweetheart? an arrant ash-colour, as I am a person. Look you how this wench stirs! Why dost thou not fetch me a little red? didst thou not hear me, mopus?

Peg. The red ratafia, does your ladyship mean, or the cherry-brandy?

L. Wish. Ratafia, fool! no, fool, not the ratafia, fool—Grant me patience! I mean the Spanish paper, idiot; complexion. Darling paint, paint, paint;—dost thou understand that, changeling, dangling thy hands like bobbins before thee? why dost thou not stir, puppet? thou wooden thing upon wires.

Peg. Lord, madam, your ladyship is so impatient—I cannot come at the paint, madam; Mrs Foible has locked it up, and carried the key with her.

L. Wish. Plague take you both——Fetch me the cherry-brandy then. [*Exit* PEG.] I'm as pale and as faint, I look like Mrs Qualmsick, the curate's wife, that's always breeding——Wench, come, come, wench, what art thou doing, sipping, tasting? save thee, dost thou not know the bottle?

PEG *enters with a Bottle and a China Cup.*

Peg. Madam, I was looking for a cup.

L. Wish. A cup, save thee! and what a cup hast thou brought! dost thou take me for a fairy, to drink out of an acorn? why didst thou not bring thy thimble? hast thou ne'er a brass thimble clinking in thy pocket with a bit of nutmeg? I warrant thee. Come fill, fill——So—again. See who that is—[*One knocks.*] Set down the bottle first.—Here, here, under the table—What, would'st thou go with the bottle in thy hand, like a tapster? [*Exit* PEG.] As I'm a person, this wench has lived in an inn upon the road, before she came to me, like Maritornes the Asturian in Don Quixote.

PEG *enters.*

No Foible yet?

Peg. No, madam, Mrs Marwood.

L. Wish. O Marwood! let her come in. Come in, good Marwood.

Mrs MARWOOD *enters.*

Mrs Mar. I am surprised to find your ladyship in *dishabille* at this time of day.

L. Wish. Foible's a lost thing; has been abroad since morning, and never heard of since.

Mrs Mar. I saw her but now, as I came masked through the Park, in conference with Mirabell.

L. Wish. With Mirabell! you call my blood into my face with mentioning that traitor. She durst not have the confidence. I sent her to negociate an affair, in which, if I'm detected, I'm undone. If that wheedling villain has wrought upon Foible to detect me, I'm ruined. Oh, my dear friend, I'm a wretch of wretches if I'm detected!

Mrs Mar. O, madam, you cannot suspect Mrs Foible's integrity.

L. Wish. O, he carries poison in his tongue that would corrupt integrity itself. If she has given him an opportunity, she has as good as put her integrity into his hands. Ah! dear Marwood, what's integrity to an opportunity! hark, I hear her—Dear friend, retire into my closet, that I may examine her with more freedom—You'll pardon me, dear friend, I can make bold with you—There are books over the chimney—Quarles and Pryn, and the Short View of the Stage, with Bunyan's Works, to entertain you—
[*Exit Mrs* MARWOOD.
Go, you thing, and send her in. [*Exit* PEG.

FOIBLE *enters.*

L. Wish. O, Foible, where hast thou been? what hast thou been doing?

Foi. Madam, I have seen the party.

L. Wish. But what hast thou done?

Foi. Nay, 'tis your ladyship has done, and are to do; I have only promised. But a man so enamoured—so transported! well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin—poor Sir Rowland, I say.

L. Wish. The miniature has been counted like

——But hast thou not betrayed me, Foible? hast thou not detected me to that faithless Mirabell? What hadst thou to do with him in the Park? Answer me, has he got nothing out of thee?

Foi. So, mischief has been before-hand with me. What shall I say? [*Aside.*] Alas, madam, could I help it? if I met that confident thing, was I in fault? If you had heard how he used me, and all upon your ladyship's account, I'm sure you would not suspect my fidelity. Nay, if that had been the worst, I could have borne it: but he had a fling at your ladyship too; and then I could not hold: but, i'faith, I gave him his own.

L. Wish. Me! what did the filthy fellow say?

Foi. O, madam, 'tis a shame to say what he said—With his taunts and his fleers, tossing up his nose. Humph, says he, what, you are a hatching some plot, says he, you are so early abroad, or catering, says he, ferreting for some disbanded officer, I warrant?—Half-pay is but thin subsistence, says he; well, what pension does your lady propose? Let me see: says he, what, she must come down pretty deep now, she's superannuated, says he, and——

L. Wish. Odds my life, I'll have him—I'll have him murdered, I'll have him poisoned! Where does he eat? I'll marry a drawer to have him poisoned in his wine: I'll send for Robin from Locket's immediately.

Foi. Poison him! poisoning is too good for him. —Starve him, madam, starve him; marry Sir Rowland, and get him disinherited. O, you would bless yourself to hear what he said.

L. Wish. A villain! superannuated!

Foi. Humph, says he, I hear you are laying designs against me too, says he, and Mrs Millamant is to marry my uncle; he does not suspect a word of your ladyship; but, says he, I'll fit you for that, I warrant you, says he; I'll hamper you for that, says he, you and your old frippery too, says he; I'll handle you——

L. Wish. Audacious villain! handle me! would he durst!—Frippery! old frippery! Was there ever such a foul-mouthed fellow? I'll be married to-mo[illegible]—I'll be contracted to-night.

Foi. [illegible] sooner the better, madam.

L. Wish. Will Sir Rowland be here, say'st thou? when, Foible?

Foi. Incontinently, madam. No new sheriff's wife expects the return of her husband after knighthood, with that impatience in which Sir Rowland burns for the dear hour of kissing your ladyship's hand after dinner.

L. Wish. Frippery! superannuated frippery! I'll frippery the villain; I'll reduce him to frippery and rags: A tatterdemallion—I hope to see him hung with tatters, like a Long-lane pent-house, or a gibbet thief. A slander-mouthed railler: I warrant the spendthrift prodigal is in debt as much as the million lottery, or the whole court upon a birth-day. I'll spoil his credit with his tailor. Yes, he shall have my niece with her fortune, he shall.

Foi. He! I hope to see him lodge in Ludgate first, and angle into Blackfriars for brass farthings, with an old mitten.

L. Wish. Ay, dear Foible; thank thee for that, dear Foible. He has put me out of all patience. I shall never recompose my features, to receive Sir Rowland with any economy of face. The wretch has fretted me, that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

Foi. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernible in the white varnish.

L. Wish. Let me see the glass—Cracks, say'st thou? why I am arrantly flayed; I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

Foi. I warrant you, madam; a little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam.

L. Wish. But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? or will he not fail when he does come? will he be importunate, Foible, and push? for, if he should not be importunate—I shall never break decorums—I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance—Oh no, I can never advance—I shall swoon if he should expect advances. No, I hope Sir Rowland is better bred than to put a lady to the necessity of breaking her forms. I won't be too coy neither.—I won't give him despair—But a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

Foi. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

L. Wish. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—A sort of a dyingness. You see that picture has a—sort of a—Ha, Foible! a swimmingness in the eyes—Yes, I'll look so—My niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? don't answer me. I won't know: I'll be surprised: I'll be taken by surprise.

Foi. By storm, madam; Sir Rowland's a brisk man.

L. Wish. Is he? O then he'll importune, if he's a brisk man. I shall save decorum if Sir Rowland importunes. I have a mortal terror at the apprehension of offending against decorums. O, I'm glad he is a brisk man. Let my things be removed, good Foible. [*Exit.*

Mrs FAINALL *enters.*

Mrs Fain. O, Foible, I have been in a fright, lest I should come too late. That devil, Marwood, saw you in the Park with Mirabell, and I'm afraid will discover it to my lady.

Foi. Discover what, madam?

Mrs Fain. Nay, nay, put not on that strange face. I am privy to the whole design, and know that Waitwell, to whom thou wert this morning married, is to personate Mirabell's uncle, and as such, winning my lady, to involve her in those difficulties from which Mirabell only must release her, by his making his conditions to have

my cousin and her fortune left to her own disposal.

Foi. O, dear madam, I beg your pardon. It was not my confidence in your ladyship that was deficient; but I thought the former good correspondence between your ladyship and Mr Mirabell might have hindered his communicating this secret.

Mrs Fain. Dear Foible, forget that.

Foi. O, dear madam, Mr Mirabell is such a sweet winning gentleman—But your ladyship is the pattern of generosity.—Sweet lady, to be so good! Mr Mirabell cannot choose but be grateful. I find your ladyship has his heart still. Now, madam, I can safely tell your ladyship our success. Mrs Marwood had told my lady; but I warrant I managed myself. I turned it all for the better; I told my lady that Mr Mirabell railed at her. I laid horrid things to his charge, I'll vow; and my lady is so incensed, that she'll be contracted to Sir Rowland to-night, she says; —I warrant I worked her up, that he may have her for asking for, as they say of a Welch maidenhead.

Mrs Fain. O, rare Foible!

Foi. Madam, I beg your ladyship to acquaint Mr Mirabell of his success. I would be seen as little as possible to speak to him—besides, I believe Madam Marwood watches me—She has a penchant; but I know Mr Mirabell cann't abide her.—[*Calls.*] John, remove my lady's toilet. Madam, your servant.—My lady is so impatient, I fear she'll come for me, if I stay.

Mrs Fain. I'll go with you up the back-stairs, lest I should meet her. [*Exeunt.*

Mrs MARWOOD *enters.*

Mrs Mar. Indeed, Mrs Engine, is it thus with you? Are you become a go-between of this importance? Yes, I shall watch you. Why this wench is the *pass-partout*, a very master-key to every body's strong box. My friend Fainall, have you carried it so swimmingly? I thought there was something in it; but it seems 'tis over with you. Your loathing is not from a want of appetite then, but from a surfeit, else you could never be so cool, to fall from a principal to be an assistant: to procure for him! a pattern of generosity, that I confess. Well, Mr Fainall, you have met with your match. O man, man! Woman, woman! The devil's an ass: if I were a painter, I would draw him like an idiot, a driveller with a bib and bells. Man should have his head and horns, and woman the rest of him. Poor simple fiend! Madam Marwood has a penchant, but he cann't abide her.—'Twere better for him you had not been his confessor in that affair, without you could have kept his counsel closer. I shall not prove another pattern of generosity—he has not obliged me to that with those excesses of himself; and now I'll have none of him. Here comes the good lady, panting ripe; with a heart full of hope, and a head full of care, like any chemist upon the day of projection.

Lady WISHFORT *enters.*

L. Wish. O, dear Marwood, what shall I say for this rude forgetfulness?—But my dear friend is all goodness.

Mrs Mar. No apologies, dear madam; I have been very well entertained.

L. Wish. As I'm a person, I am in a very chaos to think I should so forget myself—But I have such an olio of affairs, really I know not what to do—[*Calls.*] Foible—I expect my nephew Sir Wilful every moment too:—Why, Foible—He means to travel for improvement.

Mrs Mar. Methinks Sir Wilful should rather think of marrying than travelling at his years. I hear he is turned of forty.

L. Wish. O he's in less danger of being spoiled by his travels—I am against my nephew's marrying too young. It will be time enough when he comes back, and has acquired discretion to choose for himself.

Mrs Mar. Methinks Mrs Millamant and he would make a very fit match. He may travel afterwards.—'Tis a thing very usual with young gentlemen.

L. Wish. I promise you I have thought on't, and, since 'tis your judgment, I'll think on't again; I assure you I will: I value your judgment extremely. On my word I'll propose it.

FOIBLE *enters.*

Come, come, Foible—I had forgot my nephew will be here before dinner—I must make haste.

Foi. Mr Witwould and Mr Petulant are come to dine with your ladyship.

L. Wish. O dear, I cann't appear till I am dressed.—Dear Marwood, shall I be free with you again, and beg you to entertain 'em? I'll make all imaginable haste. Dear friend, excuse me.

[*Exeunt Lady* WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

Mrs MILLAMANT *and* MINCING *enter.*

Mill. Sure never any thing was so unbred as that odious man.—Marwood, your serv[illegible]

Mrs Mar. You have a colour; [illegible]'s the matter?

Mill. That horrid fellow, Petulant, has provoked me into a flame—I have broke my fan—Mincing, lend me yours.—Is not all the powder out of my hair?

Mrs Mar. No. What has he done?

Mill. Nay, he has done nothing; he has only talked—Nay, he has said nothing neither; but he has contradicted every thing that has been said. For my part, I thought Witwould and he would have quarrelled.

Min. I vow, mem, I thought once they would have fit.

Mill. Well, 'tis a lamentable thing, I swear, that one has not the liberty of choosing one's acquaintance as one does one's clothes.

Mrs Mar. If we had that liberty, we should be as weary of one set of acquaintance, though never so good, as we are of one suit, though ne-

ver so fine.—A fool and a doily stuff would now and then find days of grace, and be worn for variety.

Mill. I could consent to wear them, if they would wear alike; but fools never wear out, they are such *drap-de-berry* things, without one could give 'em to one's chambermaid after a day or two.

Mrs Mar. 'Twere better so indeed. Or what think you of the play-house? A fine, gay, glossy fool should be given there, like a new masking-habit after the masquerade is over, and we have done with the disguise. For a fool's visit is always a disguise; and never admitted by a woman of wit, but to blind her affair with a lover of sense. If you would but appear barefaced now, and own Mirabell, you might as easily put off Petulant and Witwould, as your hood and scarf. And indeed 'tis time, for the town has found it: the secret is grown too big for the pretence: 'tis like Mrs Primley's great belly; she may lace it down before, but it burnishes on her hips.—Indeed, Millamant, you can no more conceal it, than my Lady Strammel can her face, that goodly face, which, in defiance of her Rhenish-wine tea, will not be comprehended in a mask.

Mill. I'll take my death, Marwood, you are more censorious than a decayed beauty, or a discarded toast. Mincing, tell the men they may come up. My aunt is not dressing here; their folly is less provoking than your malice. [*Exit* MINCING.] The town has found it! What has it found? That Mirabell loves me, is no more a secret, than it is a secret that you discovered it to my aunt, or than the reason why you discovered it is a secret.

Mrs Mar. You are nettled.

Mill. You're mistaken. Ridiculous!

Mrs Mar. Indeed, my dear, you'll tear another fan, if you don't mitigate those violent airs.

Mill. Oh silly! ha, ha, ha! I could laugh immoderately. Poor Mirabell! His constancy to me has quite destroyed his complaisance for all the world beside.—I swear, I never enjoined it to him to be so coy—If I had the vanity to think he would obey me, I would command him to shew more gallantry. 'Tis hardly well-bred to be so particular on one hand, and so insensible on the other. But I despair to prevail, and so let him follow his own way. Ha, ha, ha! Pardon me, dear creature, I must laugh, ha, ha, ha! though I grant you 'tis a little barbarous, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Mar. What pity 'tis, so much fine raillery, and delivered with so significant a gesture, should be so unhappily directed to miscarry!

Mill. Ha, dear creature, I ask your pardon—I swear I did not mind you.

Mrs Mar. Mr Mirabell and you both may think a thing impossible, when I shall tell him by telling you——

Mill. O dear, what? for 'tis the same thing, if I hear it—Ha, ha, ha!

Mrs Mar. That I detest him, hate him, madam.

Mill. O, madam, why so do I; and yet the creature loves me; ha, ha, ha! How can one forbear laughing to think of it?—I am a sybil, if I am not amazed to think what he can see in me. I'll take my death, I think you are handsomer, and within a year or two as young—If you could but stay for me, I should overtake you—But that cannot be—Well, that thought makes me melancholy——Now I'll be sad.

Mrs Mar. Your merry note may be changed sooner than you think.

Mill. D'ye say so? Then I'm resolved I'll have a song to keep up my spirits.

MINCING *enters.*

Min. The gentlemen stay but to comb, madam; and will wait on you.

Mill. Desire Mrs ——, that is in the next room, to sing the song I would have learnt yesterday.—You shall hear it, madam—Not that there's any great matter in it, but 'tis agreeable to my humour.

SONG.

Love's but the frailty of the mind,
When 'tis not with ambition join'd;
A sickly flame, which, if not fed, expires;
And, feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires.

'Tis not to wound a wanton boy,
Or am'rous youth, that gives the joy;
But 'tis the glory to have pierced a swain,
For whom inferior beauties sigh'd in vain.

Then I alone the conquest prize,
When I insult a rival's eyes:
If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.

PETULANT *and* WITWOULD *enter.*

Mill. Is your animosity composed, gentlemen?

Wit. Raillery, raillery, madam! we have no animosity—We have hit off a little wit now and then, but no animosity—The falling-out of wits is like the falling out of lovers—We agree in the main, like treble and bass, ha, Petulant?

Pet. Ay, in the main—but, when I have a humour to contradict——

Wit. Ay, when he has a humour to contradict, then I contradict too. What, I know my cue. Then we contradict one another like two battledores; for contradictions beget one another like Jews.

Pet. If he says black's black—If I have a humour to say 'tis blue—Let that pass—All's one for that, if I have a humour to prove it; it must be granted.

Wit. Not positively must, but it may, it may.

Pet. Yes, it positively must, upon proof positive.

Wit. Ay, upon proof positive it must; but upon proof presumptive it only may. That's a logical distinction now, madam.

Mrs Mar. I perceive your debates are of importance, and very learnedly handled.

Pet. Importance is one thing, and learning's another; but a debate's a debate, that I assert.

Wit. Petulant's an enemy to learning; he relies altogether on his parts.

Pet. No, I'm no enemy to learning; it hurts not me.

Mrs Mar. That's a sign indeed 'tis no enemy to you.

Pet. No, no, 'tis no enemy to any body, but them that have it.

Mill. Well, an illiterate man's my aversion. I wonder at the impudence of an illiterate man, to offer to make love.

Wit. That I confess I wonder at too.

Mill. Ah! to marry an ignorant, that can hardly read or write.

Pet. Why should a man be any further from being married though he cann't read, than he is from being hanged? The ordinary is paid for setting the psalm, and the parish priest for reading the ceremony; and for the rest which is to follow in both cases, a man may do it without book—So all's one for that.

Mill. D'ye hear the creature? Lord, here's company, I'll be gone.

[*Exeunt* MILLAMANT *and* MINCING.

Sir WILFULL WITWOULD *enters in a riding dress, and Footman.*

Wit. In the name of Bartholomew and his fair, what have we here?

Mrs. Mar. 'Tis your brother, I fancy. Don't you know him?

Wit. Not I—Yes, I think it is he—I've almost forgot him; I have not seen him since the revolution.

Foot. Sir, my lady's dressing. Here's company; if you please to walk in in the mean time.

Sir Wil. Dressing! What, 'tis but morning here I warrant with you in London; we should count it towards afternoon in our parts, down in Shropshire—Why then belike my aunt ha'n't dined yet, ha, friend?

Foot. Your aunt, sir?

Sir Wil. My aunt, sir! yes, my aunt, sir, and your lady, sir; your lady is my aunt, sir—Why, what, dost thou not know me, friend? Why then send some body hither that does. How long hast thou lived with thy lady, fellow, ha?

Foot. A week, sir; longer than any in the house, except my lady's woman.

Sir Wil. Why then belike thou dost not know thy lady, if thou seest her; ha, friend?

Foot. Why truly, sir, I cannot safely swear to her face in a morning, before she is dress'd. 'Tis like I may give a shrewd guess at her by this time.

Sir Wil. Well, prythee, try what thou can'st do; if thou can'st not guess, inquire her out; dost hear, fellow? and tell her, her nephew, Sir Wilful Witwould, is in the house.

Foot. I shall, sir.

Sir Wil. Hold ye; hear me, friend; a word with you in your ear. Pr'ythee who are these gallants?

Foot. Really, sir, I cann't tell; here come so many here, 'tis hard to know 'em all. [*Exit.*

Sir Wil. Oons, this fellow knows less than a starling! I don't think a'knows his own name.

Mrs Mar. Mr Witwould, your brother is not behind hand in forgetfulness—I fancy he has forgot you too.

Wit. I hope so—The deuce take him that remembers first, I say.

Sir Wil. Save you, gentlemen and lady.

Mrs Mar. For shame, Mr Witwould; why won't you speak to him?—And you, sir.

Wit. Petulant, speak.

Pet. And you, sir.

Sir Wil. No offence, I hope.

[*Salutes* MARWOOD.

Mrs Mar. No sure, sir.

Wit. This is a vile dog, I see that already. No offence! Ha, ha, ha! to him; to him, Petulant; smoke him.

Pet. It seems as if you had come a journey, sir; hem, hem! [*Surveying him round.*

Sir Wil. Very likely, sir, that it may seem so.

Pet. No offence, I hope, sir.

Sir Wil. May be not, sir; thereafter as 'tis meant, sir.

Wit. Smoke the boots, the boots; Petulant, the boots; ha, ha, ha!

Pet. Sir, I presume upon the information of your boots.

Sir Wil. Why, 'tis like you may, sir: if you are not satisfied with the information of my boots, sir, if you will step to the stable, you may inquire further of my horse, sir.

Pet. Your horse, sir! your horse is an ass, sir!

Sir Wil. Do you speak by way of offence, sir?

Mrs Mar. The gentleman's merry, that's all, sir—'Slife, we shall have a quarrel betwixt an horse and ass, before they find one another out. You must not take any thing amiss from your friends, sir. You are among your friends here, though it may be you don't know it. If I am not mistaken, you are Sir Wilful Witwould.

Sir Wil. Right, lady; I am Sir Wilful Witwould, so I write myself; no offence to any body, I hope; and nephew to the Lady Wishfort of this mansion.

Mrs Mar. Don't you know this gentleman, sir?

Sir Wil. Hum! What, sure 'tis not—Yes, by'r lady, but 'tis,—'Sheart, I know not whether 'tis or no—Yea, but 'tis, by the Wrekin. Brother Anthony! What, Tony, 'ifaith! what dost thou not know me? By'r lady, nor I thee, thou art so belaced, and so beperiwig'd——'Sheart, why dost not speak?—art thou overjoy'd?

Wit. 'Odso, brother, is it you? your servant, brother.

Sir Wil. Your servant! why your's, sir. Your servant again—'Sheart, and your friend and servant to that—And a—[*Puff.*] and a slap-dragon

for your service, sir; and a hare's foot and a hare's scut for your service, sir, an you be so cold and so courtly!

Wit. No offence, I hope, brother.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, sir, but there is, and much offence—A plague! is this your inns-o'-court breeding, not to know your friends and your relations, your elders and your betters?

Wit. Why, brother Wilful of Salop, you may be as short as a Shrewsbury cake, if you please; but I tell you 'tis not modish to know relations in town.—You think you're in the country, where great lubberly brothers slabber and kiss one another when they meet, like a call of serjeants—'Tis not the fashion here; 'tis not indeed, dear brother.

Sir Wil. The fashion's a fool; and you're a fop, dear brother. 'Sheart, I've suspected this—By'r lady I conjectured you were a fop, since you began to change the style of your letters, and write in a scrap of paper gilt round the edges, no bigger than a subpœna. I might expect this when you left off, Honour'd brother, and hoping you are in good health, and so forth—To begin with a *Rat me, knight, I'm so sick of a last night's debauch*—Ods heart, and then tell a familiar tale of a cock and a bull, and a wench and a bottle, and so conclude.—You could write news before you were out of your time, when you lived with honest Pimple-Nose, the attorney, of Furnival's Inn—You could entreat to be remembered then to your friends round the Wrekin. We could have gazettes then, and Dawk's Letter, and the weekly bill, till of late days.

Pet. 'Slife, Witwould, were you ever an attorney's clerk, of the family of the Furnivals, ha, ha, ha?

Wit. Ay, ay, but that was but for a while. Not long, not long; pshaw, I was not in my own power then. An orphan, and this fellow was my guardian; ay, ay, I was glad to consent to that, man, to come to London. He had the disposal of me then. If I had not agreed to that, I might have been bound 'prentice to a felt-maker in Shrewsbury; this fellow would have bound me to a maker of felts.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, and better than be bound to a maker of fops; where, I suppose, you have served your time; and now you may set up for yourself.

Mrs Mar. You intend to travel, sir, as I'm informed?

Sir Wil. Belike I may, madam. I may chance to sail upon the salt seas, if my mind bold.

Pet. And the wind serve.

Sir Wil. Serve or not serve, I sha'n't ask licence of you, sir; nor the weather-cock, your companion. I direct my discourse to the lady, sir. 'Tis like my aunt may have told you, madam—Yes, I have settled my concerns, I may say now, and am minded to see foreign parts. If an how the peace hold, whereby, that is, taxes abate.

Mrs Mar. I thought you had designed for France at all adventures?

Sir Wil. I cann't tell that; 'tis like I may, and 'tis like I may not. I am somewhat dainty in making a resolution,—because when I make it I keep it. I don't stand shill-I shall-I then; if I say't, I'll do't; but I have thoughts to tarry a small matter in town, to learn somewhat of your lingo first, before I cross the seas. I'd gladly have a spice of your French, as they say, whereby to hold discourse in foreign countries.

Mrs Mar. Here's an academy in town for that and dancing, and curious accomplishments, calculated purely for the use of grown gentlemen.

Sir Wil. Is there? 'tis like there may.

Mrs Mar. No doubt you will return very much improved.

Wit. Yes, refined like a Dutch skipper from a whale fishing.

Lady WISHFORT *and* FAINALL *enter.*

L. Wish. Nephew, you are welcome.

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

Fain. Sir Wilful, your most faithful servant.

Sir Wil. Cousin Fainall, give me your hand.

L. Wish. Cousin Witwould, your servant; Mr Petulant, your servant—Nephew, you are welcome again. Will you drink any thing after your journey, nephew, before you eat? dinner's almost ready.

Sir Wil. I'm very well, I thank you, aunt—However, I thank you for your courteous offer. 'Sheart, I was afraid you would have been in the fashion too, and have remembered to have forgot your relations! Here's your cousin, Tony; belike I mayn't call him brother for fear of offence.

L. Wish. O, he's a railer, nephew—My cousin's a wit; and your great wits always rally their best friends to choose. When you have been abroad, nephew, you'll understand raillery better.

[FAINALL *and Mrs* MARWOOD *talk apart.*

Sir Wil. Why then let him hold his tongue in the mean time, and rail when that day comes.

MINCING *enters.*

Min. Mem, I am come to acquaint your laship that dinner is impatient.

Sir Wil. Impatient! why then belike it won't stay till I pull off my boots. Sweetheart, can you help me to a pair of slippers?—My man's with his horses, I warrant.

L. Wish. Fy, fy, nephew, you would not pull off your boots here—Go down into the hall—dinner shall stay for you—[*Exeunt* MINCING *and Sir* WILFUL.] My nephew's a little unbred, you'll pardon him, madam.—Gentlemen, will you walk? Marwood?

Mrs Mar. I'll follow you, madam, before Sir Wilful is ready.

[*Exeunt Lady* WISH. PETUL. *and* WITWOULD.

Fain. Why then Foible's a procuress; an arrant, rank, match-making procuress; and I, it seems, am a husband, a rank husband; and my wife a very arrant, rank wife—all in the way of the world.—'Sdeath! to be a cuckold by anticipation, a cuckold in embryo! Sure I was born with budding antlers like a young satyr, or a ci-

tizen's child. 'Sdeath! to be out-witted, out-jilted, out-matrimonied; if I had kept my speed like my stag, 'twere somewhat; but to crawl after, with my horns like a snail, and be outstripp'd by my wife——'tis scurvy wedlock.

Mrs Mar. Then shake it off; you have often wish'd for an opportunity to part, and now you have it. But first prevent their plot;—the half of Millamant's fortune is too considerable to be parted with to a foe, to Mirabell.

Fain. Ay, that had been mine—had you not made that fond discovery.—That had been forfeited, had they been married. My wife had added lustre to my dishonour by that increase of fortune. I could have worn 'em tipt with gold, though my forehead had been furnish'd like a deputy-lieutenant's hall.

Mrs Mar. They may prove a cap of maintenance to you still, if you can away with your wife. And she's no worse than when you had her—I dare swear she had given up her game before she was married.

Fain. Hum! that may be——

Mrs Mar. You married her to keep you; and, if you can contrive to have her keep you better than you expected, why should you not keep her longer than you intended?

Fain. The means, the means.

Mrs Mar. Discover to my lady your wife's conduct; threaten to part with her—My lady loves her, and will come to any composition to save her reputation. Take the opportunity of breaking it, just upon the discovery of this imposture. My lady will be enraged beyond bounds, and sacrifice niece, and fortune, and all at that juncture. And let me alone to keep her warm; if she should flag in her part, I will not fail to prompt her.

Fain. This has an appearance.

Mrs Mar. I'm sorry I hinted to my lady to endeavour a match between Millamant and Sir Wilful; that may be an obstacle.

Fain. O, for that matter, leave me to manage him; I'll disable him for that; he will drink like a Dane: after dinner, I'll set his hand in.

Mrs Mar. Well, how do you stand affected towards your lady?

Fain. Why, faith, I'm thinking of it.—Let me see—I am married already; so that's over. My wife has play'd the jade with me—Well, that's over too. I never loved her; or, if I had, why that would have been over too by this time. Jealous of her I cannot be, for I am certain; so there's an end of jealousy. Weary of her I am and shall be—No, there's no end of that; no, no, that were too much to hope. Thus far concerning my repose. Now for my reputation—As to my own, I married not for it; so that's out of the question. And as to my part in my wife's—Why, she had parted with hers before; so, bringing none to me, she can take none from me; it is against all rule of play, that I should lose to one who has not wherewithal to stake.

Mrs Mar. Besides you forget, marriage is honourable.

Fain. Hum! faith and that's well thought on; marriage is honourable, as you say; and if so, wherefore should cuckoldom be a discredit, being derived from so honourable a root?

Mrs Mar. Nay, I know not; if the root be honourable, why not the branches?

Fain. So, so, why this point's clear—Well, how do we proceed?

Mrs Mar. I will contrive a letter which shall be deliver'd to my lady at the time when that rascal who is to act Sir Rowland is with her. It shall come as from an unknown hand;—for the less I appear to know of the truth, the better I can play the incendiary. Besides, I would not have Foible provoked if I could help it;—because you know she knows some passages.—Nay, I expect all will come out;—but let the mine be sprung first, and then I care not if I am discovered.

Fain. If the worst come to the worst, I'll turn my wife to grass.—I have already a deed of settlement of the best part of her estate, which I wheedled out of her; and that you shall partake at least.

Mrs Mar. I hope you are convinced that I hate Mirabell now? you'll be no more jealous?

Fain. Jealous! no—by this kiss—let husbands be jealous; but let the lover still believe: or, if he doubt, let it be only to endear his pleasure, and prepare the joy that follows, when he proves his mistress true. But let husbands' doubts convert to endless jealousy; or, if they have belief, let it corrupt to superstition, and blind credulity. I am single, and will herd no more with 'em. True, I wear the badge; but I'll disown the order. And, since I take my leave of 'em, I care not if I leave 'em a common motto to their common crest;

All husbands must, or pain, or shame endure;
The wise too jealous are, fools too secure.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

Enter Lady WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

L. Wish. Is Sir Rowland coming, say'st thou, Foible? and are things in order?

Foi. Yes, madam. I have put wax-lights in the sconces, and placed the footmen in a row in the hall, in their best liveries, with the coachman and postillion to fill up the equipage.

L. Wish. Have you pulvill'd the coachman and postillion, that they may not stink of the stable, when Sir Rowland comes by?

Foi. Yes, madam.

L. Wish. And are the dancers and the music ready, that he may be entertained, in all points, with correspondence to his passion?

Foi. All is ready, madam.

L. Wish. And—well—And how do I look, Foible?

Foi. Most killing well, madam.

L. Wish. Well, and how shall I receive him? in what figure shall I give his heart the first impression? There is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—No, I won't sit—I'll walk—ay, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him.—No, that will be too sudden. I'll lie—ay, I'll lie down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room.—There's a couch—Yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch.—I won't lie neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow, with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—Yes—and then as soon as he appears, start, ay, start, and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—Yes—O, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch in some confusion—It shews the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes and re-composing airs beyond comparison. Hark! there's a coach.

Foi. Tis he, madam.

L. Wish. O dear, has my nephew made his addresses to Millamant? I ordered him.

Foi. Sir Wilfull is set in to drinking, madam, in the parlour.

L. Wish. Odds my life, I'll send him to her. Call her down, Foible; bring her hither. I'll send him as I go—when they are together, then come to me, Foible, that I may not be too long alone with Sir Rowland. [*Exit.*

MILLAMANT *and Mrs* FAINALL *enter.*

Foi. Madam, I staid here to tell your ladyship that Mr Mirabell has waited this half hour for an opportunity to talk with you. Though my lady's orders were to leave you and Sir Wilfull together. Shall I tell Mr Mirabell that you are at leisure?

Mill. No;—what would the dear man have? I am thoughtful, and would amuse myself.—Bid him come another time.

There never yet was woman made,
Nor shall, but to be curs'd.
[*Repeating, and walking about.*

That's hard!

Mrs Fain. You are very fond of Sir John Suckling to-day, Millamant, and the poets.

Mill. He? ay, and filthy verses——So I am.

Foi. Sir Wilfull is coming, madam. Shall I send Mr Mirabell away?

Mill. Ay, if you please, Foible, send him away—or send him hither—just as you will, dear Foible.—I think I'll see him—Shall I? ay, let the wretch come.

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train.
[*Repeating.*

Dear Fainall, entertain Sir Wilfull; thou hast philosophy to undergo a fool; thou art married and hast patience; I would confer with my own thoughts.

Mrs Fain. I am obliged to you, that you would make me your proxy in this affair; but I have business of my own.

Sir WILFULL *enters.*

Mrs Fain. O, Sir Wilfull, you are come at the critical instant. There's your mistress up to the ears in love and contemplation; pursue your point, now or never.

Sir Wil. Yes; my aunt will have it so. I would gladly have been encouraged with a bottle or two, because I'm somewhat wary at first, before I am acquainted; but I hope, after a time, I shall break my mind—that is, upon farther acquaintance—[*This while* MILLA. *walks about repeating to herself.*] So for the present, cousin, I'll take my leave. If so be you'll be so kind to make my excuse, I'll return to my company.——

Mrs Fain. O fie, Sir Wilfull! what, you must not be daunted.

Sir Wil. Daunted, no, that's not it; it is not so much for that—for if so be that I set on't, I'll do't. But only for the present, 'tis sufficient till further acquaintance, that's all. Your servant.

Mrs Fain. Nay, I'll swear you shall never lose so favourable an opportunity, if I can help it. I'll leave you together, and lock the door.

[*Exeunt Mrs* FAINALL *and* FOIBLE.

Sir Wil. Nay, nay, cousin; I have forgot my gloves. What d'ye do? 'Sheart! a' has locked the door indeed, I think.—Nay, cousin Fainall, open the door.—Pshaw, what a vixen trick is this!—Nay, now a' has seen me too.—Cousin, I made bold to pass through, as it were——I think this door's enchanted——

Mill. [*Repeating.*]

I pr'ythee spare me, gentle boy,
Press me no more for that slight toy.

Sir Wil. Anan! Cousin, your servant.

Mill. —That foolish trifle of a heart——
——Sir Wilfull!

Sir Wil. Yes—your servant. No offence I hope, cousin.

Mill. [*Repeating.*]

I swear it will not do its part,
Tho' thou dost thine, employ'st thy power and art.

Natural, easy Suckling!

Sir Wil. Anan! Suckling? No such suckling neither, cousin, nor stripling: I thank Heaven, I am no minor.

Mill. Ah, rustic, ruder than Gothic!

Sir Wil. Well, well, I shall understand your lingo one of these days, cousin; in the mean while I must answer in plain English.

Mill. Have you any business with me, Sir Wilfull?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin.—Yes, I made bold to see, to come and know if that how you were disposed to fetch a walk this evening: if so be that I might not be troublesome, I would have sought a walk with you.

Mill. A walk! what then?

Sir Wil. Nay, nothing; only for the walk's sake, that's all.

Mill. I nauseate walking; 'tis a country diversion; I loathe the country, and every thing that relates to it.

Sir Wil. Indeed! hah! look ye, look ye, you do? nay, 'tis like you may—Here are choice of pastimes here in town, as plays and the like, that must be confessed indeed.

Mill. *Ah l'étourdie!* I hate the town too.

Sir Wil. Dear heart, that's much——Hah! that you should hate 'em both! hah! 'tis like you may; there are some cann't relish the town, and others cann't away with the country—'tis like you may be one of those, cousin.

Mill. Ha, ha, ha! Yes, 'tis like I may.—You have nothing further to say to me?

Sir Wil. Not at present, cousin.—'Tis like when I have an opportunity to be more private—I may break my mind in some measure—I conjecture you partly guess—However, that's as time shall try——but spare to speak, and spare to speed, as they say.

Mill. If it is of no great importance, Sir Wilfull, you will oblige me by leaving me. I have just now a little business——

Sir Will. Enough, enough, cousin: yes, yes, all a case—When you're disposed. Now's as well as another time; and another time as well as now. All's one for that——Yes, yes, if your concerns call you, there's no haste; it will keep cold, as they say—Cousin, your servant.——I think this door's locked.

Mill. You may go this way, sir.

Sir Wil. Your servant; then with your leave I'll return to my company. [*Exit.*

Mill. Ay, ay; ha, ha, ha!

Like Phœbus sung the no less am'rous boy.

MIRABELL *enters.*

Mira. Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.

Do you lock yourself up from me, to make my search more curious? Or is this pretty artifice contrived, to signify that here the chace must end, and my pursuit be crowned, for you can fly no further?

Mill. Vanity! No—I'll fly and be followed to the last moment; though I am upon the very verge of matrimony, I expect you should solicit me as much as if I were wavering at the grate of a monastery, with one foot over the threshold. I'll be solicited to the very last, nay, and afterwards.

Mira. What, after the last?

Mill. O, I should think I was poor, and had nothing to bestow, if I were reduced to an inglorious ease, and freed from the agreeable fatigues of solicitation.

Mira. But do not you know, that when favours are conferred upon instant and tedious solicitation, that they diminish in their value, and that both the giver loses the grace, and the receiver lessens his pleasure?

Mill. It may be in things of common application, but never sure in love. O, I hate a lover that can dare to think he draws a moment's air independent on the bounty of his mistress. There is not so impudent a thing in nature, as the saucy look of an assured man, confident of success. The pedantic arrogance of a very husband has not so pragmatical an air.—Ah! I'll never marry, unless I am first made sure of my will and pleasure.

Mira. Would you have 'em both before marriage? Or will you be contented with only the first now, and stay for the other till after grace?

Mill. Ah! don't be impertinent—My dear liberty, shall I leave thee? My faithful solitude, my darling contemplation, must I bid you then adieu? Ay, adieu—My morning thoughts, agreeable wakings, indolent slumbers, ye *douceurs*, ye *sommeils du matin*, adieu—I cann't do it; 'tis more than impossible——Positively, Mirabell, I'll lie a-bed in a morning as long as I please.

Mira. Then I'll get up in a morning as early as I please.

Mill. Ah! idle creature, get up when you will——And, d'ye hear, I won't be called names after I'm married; positively I won't be called names.

Mira. Names!

Mill. Ay, as wife, spouse, my dear, joy, jewel, love, sweetheart, and the rest of that nauseous cant, in which men and their wives are so fulsomely familiar—I shall never bear that—Good Mirabell, don't let us be familiar or fond, nor kiss before folks, like my Lady Fadler and Sir Francis: nor go in public together the first Sunday in a new chariot, to provoke eyes and whispers, and then never be seen there together again; as if we were proud of one another the first week, and ashamed of one another ever after. Let us never visit together, nor go to a play together, but let us be very strange and well bred: let us be as strange as if we had been married a great while; and as well bred as if we were not married at all.

Mira. Have you any more conditions to offer? hitherto your demands are pretty reasonable.

Mill. Trifles—as liberty to pay and receive visits, to and from whom I please; to write and receive letters without interrogatories or wry faces on your part; to wear what I please; and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with wits that I don't like, because they are your acquaintance; or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please; dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my closet inviolate; to be sole empress of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.

Mira. Your bill of fare is something advanced in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions—That when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband?

Mill. You have free leave; propose your utmost; speak, and spare not.

Mira. I thank you. *Imprimis*, then, I covenant that your acquaintance be general; that you admit no sworn confidante, or intimate of your own sex: no she friend, to screen her affairs under your countenance, and tempt you to make trial of a mutual secrecy. No decoy-duck to wheedle you a fop-scrambling to the play in a mask—Then bring you home in a pretended fright, when you think you shall be found out—And rail at me for missing the play, and disappointing the frolic which you had to pick me up, and prove my constancy.

Mill. Detestable *imprimis*! I go to the play in a mask!

Mira. Item, I article that you continue to like your own face as long as I shall; and while it passes current with me, that you endeavour not to new-coin it. To which end, together with all vizards for the day, I prohibit all masks for the night, made of oiled-skins, and I know not what—hog's-bones, hare's-gall, pig water, and the marrow of a roasted cat. In short, I forbid all commerce with the gentlewoman in what-d'ye-call-it court. *Item*, I shut my door against all procuresses with baskets, and pennyworths of muslin, china, fans, &c. *Item*, when you shall be breeding——

Mill. Ah! name it not.

Mira. Which may be presumed, with a blessing on our endeavours——

Mill. Odious endeavours!

Mira. I denounce against all strait-lacing, squeezing for a shape, till you mould my boy's head like a sugar-loaf! and, instead of a man-child, make me father to a crooked billet. Lastly, to the dominion of the tea-table I submit—But with *proviso*, that you exceed not in your province; but restrain yourself to native and simple tea-table drinks, as tea, chocolate, and coffee. As likewise to genuine and authorized tea-table talk—Such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth—But that on no account you encroach on the men's prerogative, and presume to drink healths, or toast fellows; for prevention of which I banish all foreign forces, all auxiliaries to the tea-table, as orange-brandy, all anniseed, cinnamon, citron, and Barbadoes waters, together with ratafia, and the most noble spirit of clary.—But for cowslip wine, poppey-water, and all dormitives, those I allow.—These *proviso* admitted, in other things I may prove a tractable and complying husband.

Mill. O, horrid *proviso!* filthy strong waters! I toast fellows; odious men! I hate your odious *proviso*

Mira. Then we're agreed. Shall I kiss your hand upon the contract? And here comes one to be a witness to the sealing of the deed.

Mrs FAINALL *enters.*

Mill. Fainall, what shall I do? shall I have him? I think I must have him.

Mrs Fain. Ay, ay, take him, take him; what should you do?

Mill. Well then—I'll take my death I'm in a horrid fright—Fainall, I shall never say it—well—I think—I'll endure you.

Mrs Fain. Fie, fie, have him, have him, and tell him so in plain terms; for I am sure you have a mind to have him.

Mill. Are you? I think I have—and the horrid man looks as if he thought so too——Well, you ridiculous thing you, I'll have you—I won't be kissed, nor I won't be thanked—Here, kiss my hand though——so, hold your tongue now; don't say a word.

Mrs Fain. Mirabell, there's a necessity for your obedience; you have neither time to talk nor stay. My mother is coming; and in my conscience if she should see you, would fall into fits, and may be not recover time enough to return to Sir Rowland, who, as Foible tells me, is in a fair way to succeed. Therefore spare your ecstacies for another occasion, and slip down the back-stairs, where Foible waits to consult you.

Mill. Ay, go, go. In the mean time I'll suppose you have said something to please me.

Mira. I am all obedience. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fain. Yonder's Sir Wilfull drunk! and so noisy, that my mother has been forced to leave Sir Rowland to appease him; but he answers her only with singing and drinking—what they may have done by this time I know not; but Petulant and he were upon quarrelling as I came by.

Mill. Well, if Mirabell should not make a good husband, I am a lost thing; for I find I love him violently.

Mrs Fain. So it seems; for you mind not what's said to you.—If you doubt him, you had better take up with Sir Wilfull.

Mill. How can you name that superannuated lubber? foh!

WITWOULD *enters, from drinking.*

Mrs Fain. So, is the fray made up, that you have left 'em?

Wit. Left 'em? I could stay no longer——I have laugh'd like ten christenings—I am tipsy with laughing——If I had staid any longer I should have burst—I must have been let out and pierced in the sides, like an unsized camlet.——Yes, yes, the fray is composed; my lady came in like a *noli prosequi*, and stopt the proceedings.

Mill. What was the dispute?

Wit. That's the jest; there was no dispute. They could neither of 'em speak for rage, and

so fell a sputtering at one another, like two roasting apples.

PETULANT *enters, drunk.*

Now, Petulant, all's over, all's well? gad, my head begins to whim it about—Why dost thou not speak? thou art both as drunk and as mute as a fish.

Pet. Look you, Mrs Millamant—if you can love me, dear nymph—say it—and that's the conclusion—pass on, or pass off——that's all.

Wit. Thou hast uttered volumes, folios, in less than *decimo sexto*, my dear Lacedemonian. Sirrah, Petulant, thou art an epitomizer of words.

Pet. Witwould—You are an annihilator of sense.

Wit. Thou art a retailer of phrases, and dost deal in remnants of remnants, like a maker of pin-cushions—thou art in truth (metaphorically speaking) a speaker of short-hand.

Pet. Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest—a gemini of asses split, would make just four of you.

Wit. Thou dost bite, my dear mustard-seed; kiss me for that.

Pet. Stand off—I'll kiss no more males.——I have kissed your twin yonder in a humour of reconciliation, till he [*Hiccups*] rises upon my stomach like a raddish.

Mill. Eh! filthy creature—what was the quarrel?

Pet. There was no quarrel—there might have been a quarrel.

Wit. If there had been words enow between 'em to have expressed provocation, they had gone together by the ears like a pair of castanets.

Pet. You were the quarrel.

Mill. Me!

Pet. If I have the humour to quarrel, I can make less matters conclude premises—if you are not handsome, what then, if I have a humour to prove it?——If I shall have my reward, say so: if not, fight for your face the next time yourself ——I'll go sleep.

Wit. Do wrap thyself up like a wood-louse, and dream revenge—and hear me, if thou canst learn to write by to-morrow morning, pen me a challenge——I'll carry it for thee.

Pet. Carry your mistress's monkey a spider—go flea dogs, and read romances——I'll go to bed to my maid. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fain. He's horridly drunk—how came you all in this pickle?

Wit. A plot, a plot, to get rid of the knight.——Your husband's advice; but he sneaked off.

Sir WILFULL, *drunk, and Lady* WISHFORT *enter.*

L. Wish. Out upon't, out upon't! at years of discretion, and comport yourself at this rantipole rate!

Sir Wil. No offence, aunt.

L. Wish. Offence! as I am a person, I'm ashamed of you—foh! how you stink of wine! d'ye think my niece will ever endure such a borachio? you're an absolute borachio.

Sir Wil. Borachio!

L. Wish. At a time when you should commence an amour, and put your best foot foremost——

Sir Wil. 'Sheart! an you grutch me your liquor, make a bill—give me more drink, and take my purse. [*Sings.*

Pr'ythee fill me the glass
'Till it laugh in my face,
With ale that is potent and mellow;
He that whines for a lass
Is an ignorant ass,
For a bumper has not its fellow.

But if you would have me marry my cousin—say the word, and I'll do't—Wilfull will do't, that's the word—Wilfull will do't, that's my crest—my motto I have forgot.

L. Wish. My nephew's a little overtaken, cousin—but 'tis with drinking your health——O' my word, you are obliged to him——

Sir Wil. In vino veritas, aunt: if I drunk your health to-day, cousin——I am a borachio. But if you have a mind to be married, say the word, and send for the piper; Wilfull will do't. If not, dust it away, and let's have t'other round ——Tony! od's heart, where's Tony?—Tony's an honest fellow, but he spits after a bumper, and that's a fault. [*Sings.*

We'll drink, and we'll never ha' done, boys.
Put the glass then around with the sun, boys.
Let Apollo's example invite us;
For he's drunk every night,
And that makes him so bright,
That he's able next morning to light us.

The sun's a good pimple, an honest soaker; he has a cellar at your Antipodes. If I travel, aunt, I touch at your Antipodes——your Antipodes are good rascally sort of topsy-turvy fellows—if I had a bumper I'd stand upon my head and drink a health to them—A match or no match, cousin with the hard name?——Aunt, Wilfull will do't. If she has her maidenhead, let her look to't; if she has not, let her keep her own counsel in the mean time, and cry out at the nine month's end.

Mill. Your pardon, madam, I can stay no longer—Sir Wilfull grows very powerful. Egh! how he smells! I shall be overcome if I stay. Come, cousin.

[*Exeunt* MILLAMANT *and Mrs* FAINALL.

L. Wish. Smells! he would poison a tallow-chandler and his family. Beastly creature! I know not what to do with him. Travel, quotha! ay, travel, travel, get thee gone, get thee gone, get thee but far enough, to the Saracens, or the Tartars, or the Turks; for thou art not fit to live in a Christian commonwealth, thou beastly Pagan.

Sir Wil. Turks! no; no Turks, aunt; your Turks are infidels, and believe not in the grape.

Your Mahometan, your Musselman is a dry stinkard—No offence, aunt. My map says that your Turk is not so honest a man as your Christian. I cannot find by the map that your Mufti is orthodox, whereby it is a plain case, that orthodox is a hard word, aunt, and—[*Hiccups*] Greek for claret. [*Sings.*

To drink is a Christian diversion,
Unknown to the Turk or the Persian:
Let Mahometan fools
Live by heathenish rules,
And be damned over tea-cups and coffee;
But let British lads sing,
Crown a health to the king,
And a fig for your sultan and sophi.

FOIBLE *enters, and whispers Lady* WISHFORT.

Eh, Tony!

L. Wish. Sir Rowland impatient? good lack! what shall I do with this beastly tumbril?—go lie down and sleep, you sot; or, as I'm a person, I'll have you bastinadoed with broomsticks. Call up the wenches with broomsticks.

Sir Wil. Ahey! wenches; where are the wenches?

L. Wish. Dear cousin Witwould, get him away, and you will bind me to you inviolably. I have an affair of moment that invades me with some precipitation—you will oblige me to all futurity.

Wit. Come, knight—plague on him, I don't know what to say to him—will you go to a cock-match?

Sir Wil. With a wench, Tony? Is she a shake-bag, sirrah? let me bite your cheek for that.

Wit. Horrible! he has a breath like a bagpipe.—Ay, ay, come, will you march, my Salopian?

Sir Wil. Lead on, little Tony.—I'll follow thee, my Anthony, my Tanthony: sirrah, thou shalt be my Tanthony, and I'll be thy pig.

——*And a fig for your sultan and sophi.*

[*Exeunt Sir* WILFULL, *Mr* WIT. *and* FOIBLE.

L. Wish. This will never do. It will never make a match—At least before he has been abroad.

WAITWELL *enters disguised as for Sir* ROWLAND.

Dear Sir Rowland, I am confounded with confusion at the retrospection of my own rudeness.—I have more pardons to ask than the pope distributes in the year of jubilee. But I hope where there is likely to be so near an alliance, we may unbend the severity of decorum, and dispense with a little ceremony.

Wait. My impatience, madam, is the effect of my transport; and till I have the possession of your adorable person, I am tantalized on the rack, and do but hang, madam, on the tenter of expectation.

L. Wish. You have an excess of gallantry, Sir Rowland, and press things to a conclusion with a most prevailing vehemence—But a day or two for decency of marriage.

Wait. For decency of funeral, madam. The delay will break my heart; or if that should fail, I shall be poisoned. My nephew will get an inkling of my designs, and poison me, and I would willingly starve him before I die: I would gladly go out of the world with that satisfaction. That would be some comfort to me, if I could but live so long as to be revenged on that unnatural viper.

L. Wish. Is he so unnatural, say you? Truly I would contribute much both to the saving of your life and the accomplishment of your revenge. Not that I respect myself; though he has been a perfidious wretch to me.

Wait. Perfidious to you!

L. Wish. O, Sir Rowland, the hours that he has died away at my feet, the tears that he has shed, the oaths that he has sworn, the palpitations that he has felt, the trances and tremblings, the ardours and the ecstacies, the kneelings and the risings, the heart-heavings and the hand-gripings, the pangs and the pathetic regards of his protesting eyes! Oh, no memory can register.

Wait. What, my rival! is the rebel my rival? a' dies.

L. Wish. No, don't kill him at once, Sir Rowland; starve him gradually, inch by inch.

Wait. I'll do't. In three weeks he shall be barefoot; in a month out at knees with begging an alms. He shall starve upward and upward, till he has nothing living but his head, and then go out in a stink, like a candle's end upon a saveall.

L. Wish. Well, Sir Rowland, you have the way—You are no novice in the labyrinth of love—You have the clue—But, as I am a person, Sir Rowland, you must not attribute my yielding to any sinister appetite, or indigestion of widowhood; nor impute my complacency to any lethargy of continence. I hope you do not think me prone to any iteration of nuptials——

Wait. Far be it from me——

L. Wish. If you do, I protest I must recede—or think that I have made a prostitution of decorums; but in the vehemence of compassion, and to save the life of a person of so much importance——

Wait. I esteem it so——

L. Wish. Or else you wrong my condescension——

Wait. I do not, I do not——

L. Wish. Indeed you do.

Wait. I do not, fair shrine of virtue.

L. Wish. If you think the least scruple of carnality was an ingredient——

Wait. Dear madam, no. You are all camphire and frankincense, all chastity and odour.

L. Wish. Or that——

FOIBLE *enters.*

Foi. Madam, the dancers are ready, and there's one with a letter, who must deliver it into your own hands.

L. Wish. Sir Rowland, will you give me leave? think favourably, judge candidly, and conclude you have found a person who would suffer racks in honour's cause, dear Sir Rowland, and will wait on you incessantly. [*Exit.*

Wait. Fie, fie!—What a slavery have I undergone! Spouse, hast thou any cordial? I want spirits.

Foi. What a washy rogue art thou, to pant thus for a quarter of an hour's lying and swearing to a fine lady!

Wait. O, she is the antidote to desire. Spouse, thou wilt fare the worse for't; I shall have no appetite to iteration of nuptials—this eight and forty hours. By this hand, I'd rather be a chairman in the dog-days, than act Sir Rowland till this time to-morrow.

Lady WISHFORT *enters, with a letter.*

L. Wish. Call in the dancers.—Sir Rowland, we'll sit, if you please, and see the entertainment. [*Dance.*] Now, with your permission, Sir Rowland, I will peruse my letter—I would open it in your presence, because I would not make you uneasy. If it should make you uneasy, I would burn it: speak if it does—but you may see the superscription is like a woman's hand.

Foi. By Heaven! Mrs Marwood's. I know it.——My heart aches——get it from her——

[*To him.*

Wait. A woman's hand? No, madam, that's no woman's hand, I see that already. That's somebody whose throat must be cut.

L. Wish. Nay, Sir Rowland, since you give me a proof of your passion by your jealousy, I promise you I'll make a return by a frank communication—You shall see it—we'll open it together—Look you here. [*Reads.*] "Madam, though unknown to you,"——(Look you there; 'tis from nobody that I know.)—"I have that honour for your character, that I think myself obliged to let you know you are abused. He who pretends to be Sir Rowland is a cheat and a rascal"—— O, Heavens! what's this?

Foi. Unfortunate! all's ruin'd!

Wait. How, how! let me see, let me see—[*Reading.*] "A rascal, and disguised and suborn'd for that imposture"——O, villainy! O, villainy!——"By the contrivance of"——

L. Wish. I shall faint, I shall die, ho!

Foi. Say 'tis your nephew's hand.——Quickly:—his plot:—swear it, swear it.

Wait. Here's a villain! madam, don't you perceive it; don't you see it?

L. Wish. Too well, too well. I have seen too much.

Wait. I told you at first I knew the hand—— A woman's hand! The rascal writes a sort of a large hand; your Roman hand—I saw there was a throat to be cut presently. If he were my son, as he is my nephew, I'd pistol him.

Foi. O, treachery! But are you sure, Sir Rowland, it is his writing?

Wait. Sure! Am I here? Do I live? Do I love this pearl of India? I have twenty letters in my pocket from him, in the same character.

L. Wish. How!

Foi. O, what luck it is, Sir Rowland, that you were present at this juncture! This was the business that brought Mr Mirabell disguised to Madam Millamant this afternoon. I thought something was contriving, when he stole by me, and would have hid his face.

L. Wish. How, how!—I heard the villain was in the house indeed; and now I remember, my niece went away abruptly, when Sir Wilfull was to have made his addresses.

Foi. Then, then, madam, Mr Mirabell waited for her in her chamber; but I would not tell your ladyship, to discompose you when you were to receive Sir Rowland.

Wait. Enough: his date is short.

Foi. No, good Sir Rowland, don't incur the law.

Wait. Law! I care not for law. I can but die, and 'tis in a good cause. My lady shall be satisfied of my truth and innocence, though it cost me my life.

L. Wish. No, dear Sir Rowland, don't fight; if you should be killed I must never shew my face; or hang'd—O, consider my reputation, Sir Rowland——No, you sha'n't fight—I'll go in and examine my niece; I'll make her confess. I conjure you, Sir Rowland, by all your love, not to fight.

Wait. I am charmed, madam; I obey. But some proof you must let me give you;—I'll go for a black box, which contains the writings of my whole estate, and deliver that into your hands.

L. Wish. Ay, dear Sir Rowland, that will be some comfort: bring the black box.

Wait. And may I presume to bring a contract, to be signed this night? May I hope so far?

L. Wish. Bring what you will; but come alive, pray come alive. O, this is a happy discovery.

Wait. Dead or alive I'll come—and married we will be, in spite of treachery; ay, and get an heir that shall defeat the last remaining glimpse of hope in my abandoned nephew. Come, my buxom widow,

Ere long you shall substantial proof receive
That I'm an arrant knight——

Foi. Or arrant knave. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I—*Continues.*

Lady WISHFORT *and* FOIBLE.

L. Wish. Out of my house, out of my house, thou viper, thou serpent, that I have fostered; thou bosom traitress, that I raised from nothing—Be gone, be gone, be gone, go, go—That I took from washing of old gauze, and weaving of dead hair, with a bleak blue nose, over a chaffing-dish of starved embers, and dining behind a traverse-rag, in a shop no bigger than a bird-cage——go, go, starve again; do, do.

Foi. Dear madam, I'll beg pardon on my knees.

L. Wish. Away, out, out, go set up for yourself again: Do drive a trade, do, with your three-pennyworth of small ware, flaunting upon a packthread, under a brandy-seller's bulk, or against a dead wall by a ballad-monger. Go, hang out an old frisoneer-gorget, with a yard of yellow Colberteen again; do; an old gnaw'd mask, two rows of pins, and a child's fiddle; a glass necklace, with the beads broken, and a quilted night-cap with one ear. Go, go, drive a trade.—These were your commodities, you treacherous trull; this was the merchandize you dealt in, when I took you into my house, placed you next myself, and made you governante of my whole family. You have forgot this, have you, now you have feathered your nest?

Foi. No, no, dear madam. Do but hear me; have but a moment's patience—I'll confess all. Mr Mirabell seduced me; I am not the first that he has wheedled with his dissembling tongue; your ladyship's own wisdom has been deluded by him; then how should I, a poor ignorant, defend myself? O, madam, if you knew but what he promised me, and how he assured me your ladyship should come to no damage—Or else the wealth of the Indies should not have bribed me to conspire against so good, so sweet, so kind a lady as you have been to me.

L. Wish. No damage! What, to betray me, and marry me to a cast serving-man; to make me a receptacle, an hospital for a decayed pimp? No damage! O! thou frontless impudence, more than a big-bellied actress.

Foi. Pray do but hear me, madam. He could not marry your ladyship, madam—No, indeed, his marriage was to have been void in law; for he was married to me first, to secure your ladyship. He could not have bedded your ladyship; for if he had consummated with your ladyship, he must have run the risk of the law, and been put upon his clergy.——Yes, indeed, I inquired of the law in that case, before I would meddle or make.

L. Wish. What, then I have been your property, have I? I have been convenient to you, it seems—While you were catering for Mirabell, I have been broker for you? What, have you made a passive bawd of me? This exceeds all precedent. I am brought to fine uses, to become a botcher of second-hand marriages between Abigails and Andrews! I'll couple you. Yes, I'll baste you together, you and your Philander. I'll Duke's-Place you, as I'm a person. Your turtle is in custody already: you shall coo in the same cage, if there be a constable or warrant in the parish.

[*Exit.*

Foi. O, that ever I was born! O, that I was ever married! A bride! Ay, I shall be a Bridewell bride. Oh!

Mrs FAINALL *enters.*

Mrs Fain. Poor Foible, what's the matter?

Foi. O, madam, my lady's gone for a constable; I shall be had to a justice, and put to Bridewell to beat hemp; poor Waitwell's gone to prison already.

Mrs Fain. Have a good heart, Foible; Mirabell's gone to give security for him. This is all Marwood's and my husband's doing.

Foi. Yes, yes, I know it, madam; she was in my lady's closet, and overheard all that you said to me before dinner. She sent the letter to my lady; and that missing effect, Mr Fainall laid this plot to arrest Waitwell, when he pretended to go for the papers; and in the mean time Mrs Marwood declared all to my lady.

Mrs Fain. Was there no mention made of me in the letter?—My mother does not suspect my being in the confederacy; I fancy Marwood has not told her, though she has told my husband.

Foi. Yes, madam; but my lady did not see that part: we stifled the letter before she read so far. Has that mischievous devil told Mr Fainall of your ladyship, then?

Mrs Fain. Ay, all's out; my affair with Mirabell, every thing discovered. This is the last day of our living together, that's my comfort.

Foi. Indeed, madam, and so 'tis a comfort, if you knew all—He has been even with your ladyship; which I could have told you long enough since, but I love to keep peace and quietness by my good will: I had rather bring friends together, than set them at distance. But Mrs Marwood and he are nearer related than ever their parents thought for.

Mrs Fain. Say'st thou so, Foible? Canst thou prove this?

Foi. I can take my oath of it, madam; so can Mrs Mincing: we have had many a fair word from Madam Marwood, to conceal something that passed in our chamber one evening when we were at Hyde Park—and we were thought to have gone a-walking: but we went up unawares—though we were sworn to secrecy too: Madam Marwood took a book, and swore us upon it; but it was

but a book of poems—So long as it was not a Bible oath, we may break it with a safe conscience.

Mrs Fain. This discovery is the most opportune thing I could wish.—Now, Mincing!

MINCING *enters.*

Minc. My lady would speak with Mrs Foible, mem. Mr Mirabell is with her; he has set your spouse at liberty, Mrs Foible, and would have you hide yourself in my lady's closet, till my old lady's anger is abated. O, my old lady is in a perilous passion at something Mr Fainall has said; he swears, and my old lady cries. There's a fearful hurricane, I vow. He says, mem, how that he'll have my lady's fortune made over to him, or he'll be divorced.

Mrs Fain. Does your lady or Mirabell know that?

Minc. Yes, mem, they have sent me to see if Sir Wilfull be sober, and to bring him to them. My lady is resolved to have him, I think, rather than lose such a vast sum as six thousand pounds. O, come, Mrs Foible, I hear my old lady.

Mrs Fain. Foible, you must tell Mincing that she must prepare to vouch when I call her.

Foi. Yes, yes, madam.

Minc. O yes, mem, I'll vouch any thing for your ladyship's service, be what it will.

[*Exeunt* FOIBLE *and* MINCING.

Lady WISHFORT *and Mrs* MARWOOD *enter.*

L. Wish. O, my dear friend, how can I enumerate the benefits that I have received from your goodness? To you I owe the timely discovery of the false vows of Mirabell; to you I owe the detection of the impostor Sir Rowland; and now you are become an intercessor with my son-in-law, to save the honour of my house, and compound for the frailties of my daughter. Well, friend, you are enough to reconcile me to the bad world, or else I would retire to deserts and solitudes, and feed harmless sheep by groves and purling streams. Dear Marwood, let us leave the world, and retire by ourselves, and be shepherdesses.

Mrs Mar. Let us first dispatch the affair in hand, madam. We shall have leisure to think of retirement afterwards. Here is one who is concerned in the treaty.

L. Wish. O, daughter, daughter, is it possible thou shouldst be my child, bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and, as I may say, another me, and yet transgress the minutest particle of severe virtue? Is it possible you should lean aside to iniquity, who have been cast in the direct mould of virtue? I have not only been a mould, but a pattern for you, and a model for you, after you were brought into the world.

Mrs Fain. I don't understand your ladyship.

L. Wish. Not understand! Why, have you not been naught? have you not been sophisticated? Not understand! Here I am ruined, to compound for your caprices, and your cuckoldoms. I must part with my plate and my jewels, and ruin my niece, and all little enough.

Mrs Fain. I am wronged and abused, and so are you. 'Tis a false accusation, as false as hell, as false as your friend there, ay, or your friend's friend, my false husband.

Mrs Mar. My friend, Mrs Fainall? your husband my friend! what do you mean?

Mrs Fain. I know what I mean, madam, and so do you; and so shall the world, at a time convenient.

Mrs Mar. I am sorry to see you so passionate, madam. More temper would look more like innocence. But I have done. I am sorry my zeal to serve your ladyship and family should admit of misconstruction, or make me liable to affronts. You will pardon me, madam, if I meddle no more with an affair in which I am not personally concerned.

L. Wish. O, dear friend, I am so ashamed that you should meet with such returns.—You ought to ask pardon on your knees, ungrateful creature; she deserves more from you than all your life can accomplish.—O, don't leave me destitute in this perplexity: no, stick to me, my good genius.

Mrs Fain. I tell you, madam, you're abused—Stick to you! ay, like a leech, to suck your best blood—she'll drop off when she's full. Madam, you sha'n't pawn a bodkin, nor part with a brass counter, in composition for me. I defy 'em all. Let them prove their aspersions: I know my own innocence, and dare stand a trial. [*Exit.*

L. Wish. Why, if she should be innocent, if she should be wronged after all, ha? I don't know what to think—and I promise you, her education has been very unexceptionable—I may say it; for I chiefly made it my own care to initiate her very infancy in the rudiments of virtue, and to impress upon her tender years a young odium and aversion to the very sight of men—ay, friend, she would ha' shrieked if she had but seen a man, till she was in her teens. As I'm a person, 'tis true—She was never suffered to play with a male-child, though but in coats; nay, her very babies were of the feminine gender.——O, she never looked a man in the face, but her own father, or the chaplain, and him we made a shift to put upon her for a woman, by the help of his long garments and his sleek face, till she was going in her fifteen.

Mrs Mar. 'Twas much she should be deceived so long.

L. Wish. I warrant you, or she would never have borne to have been catechized by him; and have heard his long lectures against singing and dancing, and such debaucheries; and going to filthy plays, and profane music-meetings, where the lewd trebles squeak nothing but bawdy, and the basses roar blasphemy. O, she would have swooned at the sight or name of an obscene play-book—and can I think, after all this, that my daughter can be naught? What, a whore! and thought it excommunication to set her foot within the door of a play-house. O, dear friend, I

cann't believe it. No, no; as she says, let him prove it, let him prove it.

Mrs Mar. Prove it, madam? what, and have your name prostituted in a public court! yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of bawling lawyers! to be ushered in with an O-yes of scandal, and have your case opened by an old fumbling lecher in a coif, like a man-midwife, to bring your daughter's infamy to light; to be a theme for legal punsters and quibblers by the statute, and become a jest, against a rule of court, where there is no precedent for a jest in any record; not even in Doomsday-book; to discompose the gravity of the bench, and provoke naughty interrogatories in more naughty law Latin; while the good judge, tickled with the proceeding, simpers under a grey beard, and fidgets off and on his cushion, as if he had swallowed cantharides, or sate upon cow-itch.

L. Wish. O, 'tis very hard!

Mrs Mar. And then to have my young revellers of the temple take notes, like 'prentices at a conventicle; and after talk it over again in commons, or before drawers in an eating-house.

L. Wish. Worse and worse.

Mrs Mar. Nay, this is nothing; if it would end here 'twere well. But it must, after this, be consigned by the short-hand writers to the public press; and from thence be transferred to the hands, nay, into the throats and lungs of hawkers, with voices more licentious than the loud flounder-man's; and this you must hear till you are stunned; nay, you must hear nothing else for some days.

L. Wish. O, 'tis insupportable! No, no, dear friend, make it up, make it up; ay, ay, I'll compound. I'll give up all, myself and my all, my niece and her all—any thing, every thing for composition.

Mrs Mar. Nay, madam, I advise nothing; I only lay before you, as a friend, the inconveniencies which perhaps you have overseen. Here comes Mr Fainall—If he will be satisfied to huddle up all in silence, I shall be glad. You must think I would rather congratulate than condole with you.

FAINALL *enters.*

L. Wish. Ay, ay, I do not doubt it, dear Marwood: no, no, I do not doubt it.

Fain. Well, madam; I have suffered myself to be overcome by the importunity of this lady, your friend; and am content you shall enjoy your own proper estate during life; on condition you oblige yourself never to marry, under such penalty as I shall think convenient.

L. Wish. Never to marry!

Fain. No more Sir Rowlands—the next imposture may not be so timely detected.

Mrs Mar. That condition, I dare answer, my lady will consent to without difficulty; she has already but too much experienced the perfidiousness of men. Besides, madam, when we retire to our pastoral solitude, we shall bid adieu to all other thoughts.

L. Wish. Ay, that's true; but in case of necessity, as of health, or some such emergency——

Fain. O, if you are prescribed marriage, you shall be considered; I will only reserve to myself the power to choose for you. If your physic be wholesome, it matters not who is your apothecary. Next, my wife shall settle on me the remainder of her fortune, not made over already; and for her maintenance depend entirely on my discretion.

L. Wish. This is most inhumanly savage; exceeding the barbarity of a Muscovite husband.

Fain. I learned it from his Czarish majesty's retinue, in a winter evening's conference over brandy and pepper, amongst other secrets of matrimony and policy, as they are at present practised in the northern hemisphere. But this must be agreed unto, and that positively. Lastly, I will be endowed, in right of my wife, with that six thousand pounds which is the moiety of Mrs Millamant's fortune in your possession, and which she has forfeited (as will appear by the last will and testament of your deceased husband, Sir Jonathan Wishfort) by her disobedience in contracting herself against your consent or knowledge; and by refusing the offered match with Sir Wilfull Witwould, which you, like a careful aunt, had provided for her.

L. Wish. My nephew was *non compos*, and could not make his addresses.

Fain. I come to make demands—I'll hear no objections.

L. Wish. You will grant me time to consider?

Fain. Yes, while the instrument is drawing, to which you must set your hand till more sufficient deeds can be perfected, which I will take care shall be done with all possible speed. In the mean while I will go for the said instrument, and, till my return, you may balance this matter in your own discretion. [*Exit.*

L. Wish. This insolence is beyond all precedent, all parallel. Must I be subject to this merciless villain?

Mrs Mar. 'Tis severe indeed, madam, that you should smart for your daughter's failings.

L. Wish. 'Twas against my consent that she married this barbarian; but she would have him, though her year was not out—Ah! her first husband, my son Languish, would not have carried it thus. Well, that was my choice, this is hers; she is matched now with a witness—I shall be mad, dear friend: is there no comfort for me? Must I live to be confiscated at this rebel rate?—Here come two more of my Egyptian plagues too.

Mrs MILLAMANT *and Sir* WILFULL *enter.*

Sir Wil. Aunt, your servant.

L. Wish. Out, caterpillar! call not me aunt; I know thee not.

Sir Wil. I confess I have been a little in disguise, as they say—'Sheart! and I'm sorry for't. What would you have? I hope I committed no offence, aunt—and if I did, I am willing to make satisfaction; and what can a man say fairer? If I have broke any thing, I'll pay for't, an it cost a

pound; and so let that content for what's past, and make no more words.—For what's to come, to pleasure you, I'm willing to marry my cousin. So pray let's all be friends: she and I are agreed upon the matter before a witness.

L. Wish. How's this, dear niece? have I any comfort? can this be true.

Mill. I am content to be a sacrifice to your repose, madam; and to convince you that I had no hand in the plot, as you were misinformed. I have laid my commands on Mirabell to come in person, and be a witness that I give my hand to this flower of knighthood; and for the contract that passed between Mirabell and me, I have obliged him to make a resignation of it in your ladyship's presence——he is without, and waits your leave for admittance.

L. Wish. Well, I'll swear I am something revived at this testimony of your obedience; but I cannot admit that traitor——I fear I cannot fortify myself to support his appearance. He is as terrible to me as a Gorgon; if I see him I fear I shall turn to stone, and petrify incessantly.

Mill. If you disoblige him, he may resent your refusal, and insist upon the contract still. Then, 'tis the last time he will be offensive to you.

L. Wish. Are you sure it will be the last time?——If I were sure of that——shall I never see him again?

Mill. Sir Wilfull, you and he are to travel together, are you not?

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, the gentleman's a civil gentleman, aunt; let him come in; why, we are sworn brothers and fellow-travellers. We are to be Pylades and Orestes, he and I—He is to be my interpreter in foreign parts. He has been overseas once already, and with proviso that I marry my cousin, will cross 'em once again, only to bear me company.—'Sheart, I'll call him in,—an I set on't once, he shall come in; and see who'll hinder him. [*Goes to the door and hems.*

Mrs Mar. This is precious fooling, if it would pass; but I'll know the bottom of it.

L. Wish. O, dear Marwood, you are not going?

Mrs Mar. Not far, madam; I'll return immediately. [*Exit.*

MIRABELL *enters.*

Sir Wil. Look up, man; I'll stand by you; 'sbud, an she do frown, she cann't kill you;——besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own; 'sheart, an she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream-cheese; but mum for that, fellow-traveller.

Mira. If a deep sense of the many injuries I have offered to so good a lady, with a sincere remorse, and a hearty contrition, can but obtain the least glance of compassion, I am too happy.—Ah, madam, there was a time—but let it be forgotten—I confess I have deservedly forfeited the high place I once held, of sighing at your feet; nay, kill me not, by turning from me in disdain—I come not to plead for favour; nay, not for pardon; I am suppliant only for pity.—I am going where I never shall behold you more.—

Sir Wil. How, fellow-traveller!—you shall go by yourself then.

Mira. Let me be pitied first, and afterwards forgotten—I ask no more.

Sir Wil. By'r lady, a very reasonable request, and will cost you nothing, aunt—Come, come, forgive and forget, aunt; why, you must, an you are a Christian.

Mira. Consider, madam, in reality, you could not receive much prejudice; it was an innocent device;—though I confess it had a face of guiltiness; it was at most an artifice which love contrived—and errors which love produces have ever been accounted venial. At least think it is punishment enough, that I have lost what in my heart I hold most dear; that to your cruel indignation I have offered up this beauty, and with her my peace and quiet; nay, all my hopes of future comfort.

Sir Wil. An he does not move me, would I may never be o' the quorum. An it were not as good a deed as to drink, to give her to him again—I would I might never take shipping. Aunt, if you don't forgive quickly, I shall melt, I can tell you that.—My contract went no farther than a little mouth-glue, and that's hardly dry;—one doleful sigh more from my fellow-traveller, and 'tis dissolved.

L. Wish. Well, nephew, upon your account—Ah, he has a false, insinuating tongue. Well, sir, I will stifle my just resentment, at my nephew's request—I will endeavour what I can to forget,—but on proviso that you resign the contract with my niece immediately.

Mira. It is in writing, and with papers of concern; but I have sent my servant for it, and will deliver it to you, with all acknowledgments for your transcendent goodness.

L. Wish. Oh, he has witchcraft in his eyes and tongue:—when I did not see him, I could have bribed a villain to his assassination; but his appearance rakes the embers which have so long lain smothered in my breast. [*Aside.*

FAINALL *and Mrs* MARWOOD *enter.*

Fain. Your debate of deliberation, madam, is expired. Here is the instrument; are you prepared to sign?

L. Wish. If I were prepared, I am not empowered. My niece exerts her lawful claim, having matched herself, by my direction, to Sir Wilfull.

Fain. That sham is too gross to pass on me—though 'tis imposed on you, madam.

Mill. Sir, I have given my consent.

Mira. And I, sir, have resigned my pretensions.

Sir Wil. And, sir, I assert my right, and will maintain it, in defiance of you, sir, and of your instrument. 'Sheart, an you talk of an instrument, sir, I have an old fox by my thigh shall back your instrument of ram vellum to shreds, sir. It

shall not be sufficient for a *mittimus*, or a tailor's measure; therefore withdraw your instrument, or, by'r lady, I shall draw mine.

L. Wish. Hold, nephew, hold.

Mill. Good Sir Wilfull, respite your valour.

Fain. Indeed! are you provided of your guard, with your single beef-eater there? But I am prepared for you, and insist upon my first proposal. You shall submit your own estate to my management, and absolutely make over my wife's to my sole use, as pursuant to the purport and tenour of this other covenant. I suppose, madam, your consent is not requisite in this case; nor, Mr Mirabell, your resignation; nor, Sir Wilfull, your right—You may draw your fox, if you please, sir, and make a Bear-garden flourish somewhere else; for here it will not avail. This, my lady Wishfort, must be subscribed, or your darling daughter's turned adrift, like a leaky hulk, to sink or swim, as she and the current of this lewd town can agree.

L. Wish. Is there no means, no remedy, to stop my ruin? Ungrateful wretch! Dost thou not owe thy being, thy subsistence to my daughter's fortune?

Fain. I'll answer you when I have the rest of it in my possession.

Mira. But that you would not accept of a remedy from my hands—I own I have not deserved you should owe any obligation to me; or else perhaps I could advise——

L. Wish. O, what? what? to save me and my child from ruin, from want, I'll forgive all that's past; nay, I'll consent to any thing to come, to be delivered from this tyranny.

Mira. Ay, madam; but that is too late; my reward is intercepted. You have disposed of her who only could have made me a compensation for all my services;—but be it as it may, I'm resolved I'll serve you; you shall not be wronged in this savage manner.

L. Wish. How! Dear Mr Mirabell, can you be so generous at last! But it is not possible.—Harkee, I'll break my nephew's match; you shall have my niece yet, and all her fortune, if you can but save me from this imminent danger.

Mira. Will you? I take you at your word. I ask no more. I must have leave for two criminals to appear.

L. Wish. Ay, ay, any body, any body.

Mira. Foible is one, and a penitent.

Mrs FAINALL, FOIBLE, *and* MINCING *enter.*

Mrs Mar. O, my shame! [MIRABELL *and Lady* WISH. *go to Mrs* FAINALL *and* FOIBLE.] These corrupt things are brought hither to expose me. [*To* FAINALL.

Fain. If it must all come out, why, let 'em know it; 'tis but "The Way of the World." That shall not urge me to relinquish or abate one tittle of my terms; no, I will insist the more.

Foi. Yes indeed, madam, I'll take my Bible oath of it.

Minc. And so will I, mem.

L. Wish. O, Marwood, Marwood, art thou false? My friend deceive me! Hast thou been a wicked accomplice with that profligate man?

Mrs Mar. Have you so much ingratitude and injustice, to give credit, against your friend, to the aspersions of two such mercenary trulls?

Minc. Mercenary, mem! I scorn your words. 'Tis true we found you and Mr Fainall in the blue garret; by the same token, you swore us to secrecy upon Messalina's poems. Mercenary! No, if we would have been mercenary, we should have held our tongues; you would have bribed us sufficiently.

Fain. Go; you are an insignificant thing. Well, what are you the better for this? Is this Mr Mirabell's expedient? I'll be put off no longer—You thing, that was a wife, shall smart for this. I will not leave thee wherewithal to hide thy shame: Your person shall be naked as your reputation.

Mrs Fain. I despise you, and defy your malice—You have aspersed me wrongfully—I have proved your falsehood—Go, you and your treacherous—I will not name it—but starve together—Perish.

Fain. Not while you are worth a groat, indeed, my dear.—Madam, I'll be fooled no longer.

L. Wish. Ah, Mr Mirabell, this is small comfort, the detection of this affair.

Mira. O, in good time—Your leave for the other offender and penitent to appear, madam.

WAITWELL *enters with a box of writings.*

L. Wish. O, Sir Rowland—Well, rascal.

Wait. What your ladyship pleases.—I have brought the black box at last, madam.

Mira. Give it me. Madam, you remember your promise.

L. Wish. Ay, dear sir.

Mira. Where are the gentlemen?

Wait. At hand, sir, rubbing their eyes—just risen from sleep.

Fain. 'Sdeath! what's this to me? I'll not wait your private concerns.

PETULANT *and* WITWOULD *enter.*

Pet. How now? what's the matter? whose hand's out?

Wit. Hey-day! what, are you all together, like players at the end of the last act?

Mira. You may remember, gentlemen, I once requested your hands as witnesses to a certain parchment.

Wit. Ay, I do; my hand I remember——Petulant set his mark.

Mira. You wrong him; his name is fairly written, as shall appear—You do not remember, gentlemen, any thing of what that parchment contained. [*Undoing the box.*

Wit. No.

Pet. Not I. I writ; I read nothing.

Mira. Very well, now you shall know.—Madam, your promise.

L. Wish. Ay, ay, sir, upon my honour.

Mira. Mr Fainall, it is now time that you should know that your lady, while she was at her

own disposal, and before you had by your insinuations wheedled her out of a pretended settlement of the greatest part of her fortune——

Fain. Sir! pretended!

Mira. Yes, sir, I say that this lady, while a widow, having, it seems, received some cautions respecting your inconstancy and tyranny of temper, which, from her own partial opinion and fondness of you she could never have suspected —She did, I say, by the wholesome advice of friends, and of sages learned in the laws of this land, deliver this same as her act and deed to me in trust, and to the uses within mentioned. You may read if you please—[*Holding out the parchment*]—though perhaps what is written on the back may serve your occasions.

Fain. Very likely, sir. What's here? Damnation! [*Reads.*] "A deed of conveyance of the whole estate real of Arabella Languish, widow, in trust, to Edward Mirabell."—Confusion!

Mira. Even so, sir: 'tis "The Way of the World," sir; of the widows of the world. I suppose this deed may bear an elder date than what you have obtained from your lady.

Fain. Perfidious fiend! then thus I'll be revenged—— [*Offers to run at Mrs* FAINALL.

Sir Wil. Hold, sir; now you may make your Bear-garden flourish somewhere else, sir.

Fain. Mirabell, you shall hear of this, sir, be sure you shall.—Let me pass, oaf. [*Exit.*

Mrs Fain. Madam, you seem to stifle your resentment: you had better give it vent.

Mrs Mar. Yes, it shall have vent—and to your confusion, or I'll perish in the attempt. [*Exit.*

L. Wish. O, daughter, daughter! 'tis plain thou hast inherited thy mother's prudence.

Mrs Fain. Thank Mr Mirabell, a cautious friend, to whose advice all is owing.

L. Wish. Well, Mr Mirabell, you have kept your promise—and I must perform mine.—First, I pardon for your sake Sir Rowland there and Foible. The next thing is to break the matter to my nephew—and how to do that——

Mira. For that, madam, give yourself no trouble—let me have your consent——Sir Wilfull is my friend; he has had compassion upon lovers, and generously engaged a volunteer in this action, for our service, and now designs to prosecute his travels.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, aunt, I have no mind to marry.—My cousin's a fine lady, and the gentleman loves her, and she loves him, and they deserve one another; my resolution is to see foreign parts—I have set on't—and when I'm set on't, I must do't. And if these two gentlemen would travel too, they might be spared.

Pet. For my part, I say little—I think things are best off or on.

Wait. 'Egad, I understand nothing of the matter.—I'm in a maze yet, like a dog in a dancing-school.

L. Wish. Well, sir, take her, and with her all the joy I can give you.

Mill. Why does not the man take me? Would you have me give myself to you over again?

Mira. Ay, and over and over again; [*Kisses her hand;*] I would have you as often as possibly I can. Well, Heaven grant I love you not too well, that's all my fear.

Sir Wil. 'Sheart, you'll have time enough to toy after you're married; or if you will toy now, let us have a dance in the mean time, that we who are not lovers may have some other employment, besides looking on.

Mira. With all my heart, dear Sir Wilfull.—What shall we do for music?

Foi. O, sir, some that were provided for Sir Rowland's entertainment are yet within call.

[*A dance.*

L. Wish. As I am a person, I can hold out no longer——I have wasted my spirits so to-day already, that I am ready to sink under the fatigue; and I cannot but have some fears upon me yet, that my son Fainall will pursue some desperate course.

Mira. Madam, disquiet not yourself on that account; to my knowledge his circumstances are such, he must of force comply. For my part, I will contribute all that in me lies to a re-union: in the mean time, madam, [*To Mrs* FAINALL,] let me, before these witnesses, restore to you this deed of trust; it may be a means, well managed, to make you live easily together.

From hence let those be warned who mean to wed,
Lest mutual falsehood stain the bridal bed;
For each deceiver to his cost may find,
That marriage frauds too oft are paid in kind.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

AFTER our epilogue this crowd dismisses,
I'm thinking how this play'll be pulled to pieces.
But pray consider, ere you doom its fall,
How hard a thing 'twould be to please you all.
There are some critics so with spleen diseased,
They scarcely come inclining to be pleased:
And sure he must have more than mortal skill,
Who pleases any one against his will.

Then all bad poets, we are sure, are foes,
And how their number's swelled, the town well knows;
In shoals I've marked 'em judging in the pit,
Though they're on no pretence for judgment fit,
But that they have been damned for want of wit;
Since when, they, by their own offences taught,
Set up for spies on plays, and finding fault.
Others there are whose malice we'd prevent;
Such, who watch plays with scurrilous intent
To mark out who by characters are meant:
And though no perfect likeness they can trace,
Yet each pretends to know the copied face.
These with false glosses feed their own ill nature,
And turn to libel what was meant a satire.

May such malicious fops this fortune find,
To think themselves alone the fools designed;
If any are so arrogantly vain,
To think they singly can support a scene,
And furnish fool enough to entertain!
For well the learned and the judicious know,
That satire scorns to stoop so meanly low,
As any one abstracted fop to show;
For, as, when painters form a matchless face,
They from each fair one catch some different grace,
And shining features in one portrait blend,
To which no single beauty must pretend;
So poets oft do in one piece expose
Whole *belles assemblées* of coquettes and beaux.

any thing you have a mind to. But I shall play the fool, and jest on, till I make you begin to think I am in earnest.

Bel. I sha'n't take the liberty, madam, to think of any thing that you desire to keep a secret from me.

L. Brute. Alas, my dear, I have no secrets. My heart could ne'er yet confine my tongue.

Bel. Your eyes, you mean, for I am sure I have seen them gadding, when your tongue has been locked up safe enough.

L. Brute. My eyes gadding! Pr'ythee after who, child?

Bel. Why, after one that thinks you hate him, as much as I know you love him.

L. Brute. Constant, you mean.

Bel. I do so.

L. Brute. Lord, what should put such a thing into your head?

Bel. That which puts things into most people's heads,—observation.

L. Brute. Why, what have you observed, in the name of wonder?

Bel. I have observed you blush when you met him; force yourself away from him; and then be out of humour with every thing about you: in a word, never was a poor creature so spurr'd on by desire, or so reined in with fear.

L. Brute. How strong is fancy!

Bel. How weak is woman!

L. Brute. Pr'ythee, niece, have a better opinion of your aunt's inclination.

Bel. Dear aunt, have a better opinion of your niece's understanding.

L. Brute. You'll make me angry.

Bel. You'll make me laugh.

L. Brute. Then you are resolved to persist?

Bel. Positively.

L. Brute. And all I can say——

Bel. Will signify nothing.

L. Brute. Though I should swear it were false——

Bel. I should think it true.

L. Brute. Then let us forgive, [*Kissing her,*] for we have both offended: I, in making a secret; you, in discovering it.

Bel. Good nature may do much; but you have more reason to forgive one, than I have to pardon t'other.

L. Brute. 'Tis true, Belinda, you have given me so many proofs of your friendship, that my reserve has been, indeed, a crime; but that you may more easily forgive me, remember, child, that when our nature prompts us to a thing our honour and religion forbid us, we would (were it possible) conceal, even from the soul itself, the knowledge of the body's weakness.

Bel. Well, I hope, to make your friend amends, you'll hide nothing from her for the future, though the body should still grow weaker and weaker.

L. Brute. No, from this moment I have no more reserve; and as proof of my repentance, I own, Belinda, I am in danger. Merit and wit assault me from without, nature and love solicit me within; my husband's barbarous usage piques me to revenge; and Satan, catching the fair occasion, throws in my way that vengeance, which of all vengeance pleases women best.

Bel. 'Tis well Constant don't know the weakness of the fortification; for, o' my conscience, he'd soon on to the assault.

L. Brute. Ay, and I'm afraid carry the town too. But whatever you may have observed, I have dissembled so well as to keep him ignorant. So you see I'm no coquette, Belinda; and if you'll follow my advice, you'll never be one neither. 'Tis true, coquetry is one of the main ingredients in the natural composition of a woman; and I, as well as others, could be well enough pleased to see a crowd of young fellows ogling, and glancing, and watching all occasions to do forty foolish officious things; nay, should some of 'em push on, even to hanging or drowning, why—faith—if I should let pure woman alone, I should e'en be too well pleased with it.

Bel. I'll swear 'twould tickle me strangely.

L. Brute. But, after all, 'tis a vicious practice in us to give the least encouragement but where we design to come to a conclusion; for 'tis an unreasonable thing to engage a man in a disease, which we before-hand resolve we will never apply a cure to.

Bel. 'Tis true; but then a woman must abandon one of the supreme blessings of her life; for I am fully convinced, no man has half that pleasure in gallanting a mistress, as a woman has in jilting a gallant.

L. Brute. The happiest woman then on earth must be our neighbour.

Bel. Oh, the impertinent composition! She has vanity and affectation enough to make her a ridiculous original, and in spite of all that art and nature ever furnished to any of her sex before her.

L. Brute. She concludes all men her captives; and whatever course they take, it serves to confirm her in that opinion.

Bel. If they shun her, she thinks 'tis modesty, and takes it for a proof of their passion.

L. Brute. And if they are rude to her, 'tis conduct, and done to prevent town-talk.

Bel. When her folly makes 'em laugh, she thinks they are pleased with her wit.

L. Brute. And when her impertinence makes 'em dull, concludes they are jealous of her favours.

Bel. All their actions and their words, she takes for granted, aim at her.

L. Brute. And pities all other women, because she thinks they envy her.

Bel. Pray, out of pity to ourselves, let us find a better subject, for I'm weary of this.—Do you think your husband inclined to jealousy?

L. Brute. O no; he does not love me well enough for that. Lord, how wrong men's maxims are!—They are seldom jealous of their wives, unless they are very fond of 'em; whereas they ought to consider the women's inclinations, for there depends their fate. Well, men may talk, but they are not so wise as we, that's certain.

Bel. At least in our affairs.

L. Brute. Nay, I believe we should outdo 'em

in the business of the state too; for, methinks, they do and undo, and make but bad work on't.

Bel. Why then don't we get into the intrigues of government as well as they?

L. Brute. Because we have intrigues of our own, that make us more sport, child. And so let's in, and consider of 'em. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Dressing-Room.*

Enter Lady FANCYFUL, MADEMOISELLE, *and* CORNET.

L. Fan. How do I look this morning?

Cor. Your ladyship looks very ill, truly.

L. Fan. Lard, how ill-natured thou art, Cornet, to tell me so, though the thing should be true. Don't you know that I have humility enough to be but too easily out of conceit with myself? Hold the glass; I dare say that will have more manners than you have. Mademoiselle, let me have your opinion too.

Madem. My opinion pe, matam, dat your ladyship never look so well in your life.

L. Fan. Well, the French are the prettiest obliging people; they say the most acceptable, well-mannered things—and never flatter.

Madem. Your ladyship say great justice inteed.

L. Fan. Nay, every thing is just in my house but Cornet. The very looking-glass gives her the *dementi*. But I'm almost afraid it flatters me, it makes me look so very engaging.

[*Looking affectedly in the glass.*

Madem. Inteed, matam, your face be handsomer den all de looking-glass in de world, *croyez moy.*

L. Fan. But is it possible my eyes can be so languishing, and so very full of fire?

Madem. Matam, if de glass was burning-glass, I believe your eyes set de fire in de house.

L. Fan. You may take that night-gown, Mademoiselle; get out of the room, Cornet—I cann't endure you. This wench, methinks, does look so insufferably ugly.

Madem. Every ting look ugly, matam, dat stand by your latyship.

L. Fan. No, really, Mademoiselle, methinks you look mighty pretty.

Madem. Ah, matam, de moon have no eclat, ven de sun appear.

L. Fan. O, pretty expression! Have you ever been in love, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Ouy, matam! [*Sighing.*

L. Fan. And were you beloved again?

Madem. No, matam. [*Sighing.*

L. Fan. O ye gods! what an unfortunate creature should I be in such a case! But nature has made me nice for my own defence; I'm nice, strangely nice, Mademoiselle. I believe, were the merit of all mankind bestowed upon one single person, I should still think the fellow wanted something to make it worth my while to take notice of him; and yet I could love—nay, fondly love, were it possible to have a thing made on purpose for me; for I'm not cruel, Mademoiselle, I'm only nice.

Madem. Ah, matam, I wish I was fine gentleman for your sake! I do all de ting in de world to get a little way into your heart. I make song, I make verse, I give you de serenade, I give great many present to Mademoiselle; I no eat, I no sleep, I be lean, I be mad, I hang myself, I drown myself. Ah, *ma chere dame, que je vous aimerois!* [*Embracing her.*

L. Fan. Well, the French have strange obliging ways with 'em; you may take those two pair of gloves, Mademoiselle.

Madem. Me humbly tank my sweet lady.

Enter Servant with a letter.

Serv. Madam, here's a letter for your ladyship.

L. Fan. 'Tis thus I am importuned every morning, Mademoiselle. Pray, how do the French ladies when they are thus accablées?

Madem. Matam, dey never complain. Au contraire, when one Frense laty have got a hundred lover, den she do all she can—to get a hundred more.

L. Fan. Well, let me die, I think they have le gout bon. For 'tis an unutterable pleasure to be adored by all the men, and envied by all the women——Yet I'll swear I'm concerned at the torture I give 'em. Lard, why was I formed to make the whole creation uneasy? But let me read my letter. [*Reads.*

'If you have a mind to hear of your faults, instead of being praised for your virtues, take the pains to walk in the Green-walk in St James's Park, with your woman, an hour hence. You'll there meet one, who hates you for some things, as he could love you for others, and therefore is willing to endeavour your reformation———If you come to the place I mention, you'll know who I am: If you don't, you never shall: so take your choice.' This is strangely familiar, Mademoiselle; now have I a provoking fancy to know who this impudent fellow is.

Madem. Den take your scarf and your mask, and go to de rendezvous. De Frense laty do justement comme ça.

L. Fan. Rendezvous! What, rendezvous with a man, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Eh, pourquoy non?

L. Fan. What, and a man perhaps I never saw in my life?

Madem. Tant mieux: c'est donc quelque chose de nouveau.

L. Fan. Why, how do I know what designs he may have? He may intend to ravish me, for aught I know.

Madem. Ravish! Bagatelle. I would fain see one impudent rogue ravish Mademoiselle. Oui, je le voudrois.

L. Fan. O, but my reputation, Mademoiselle, my reputation; ah, ma chere reputation!

Madem. Matam—Quand on l'a une fois perdus——On n'en est plus embarassée.

L. Fan. Fie, Mademoiselle, fie! reputation is a jewel.

Madem. Qui coute bien chere, matam.

L. Fan. Why sure you would not sacrifice your h. nour to your pleasure?

Madem. Je suis philosophe.

L. Fan. Bless me, how you talk! Why, what if honour be a burden, Mademoiselle, must it not be borne?

Madem. Chaqu'un à sa façon—Quand quelque chose m'incommode, moi—je m'en defais, vite.

L. Fan. Get you gone, you little naughty Frenchwoman you: I vow and swear I must turn you out of doors, if you talk thus.

Madem. Turn me out of doors!——turn yourself out of doors, and go see what de gentleman have to say to you—Tenez. Voilà [*Giving her her things hastily.*] votre esharp, voilà votre coife, voilà votra masque, voila tout. Hey, Mercure, coquin: call one chair for matam, and one oder [*Calling within.*] for me. Va t'en vite. [*Turning to her Lady, and helping her on hastily with her things.*] Allons, matam; depechez vous donc. Mon dieu, quelles scruples!

L. Fan. Well, for once, Mademoiselle, I'll follow your advice, out of the intemperate desire I have to know who this ill-bred fellow is; but I have too much delicatesse to make a practice on't.

Madem. Belle chose vrayment que la delicatesse, lors qu'il s'agit de divertir——a ca—Vous voilà équipee, partons.—Hé bien? qu' avez vous donc!

L. Fan. J'ay peur.

Madem. Je n'en ai point moi.

L. Fan. I dare not go.

Madem. Demeurez donc.

L. Fan. Je suis poltrone.

Madem. Tant pis pour vous.

L. Fan. Curiosity's a wicked devil.

Madem. C'est une charmante sainte.

L. Fan. It ruined our first parents.

Madem. Elle a bien diverti leurs enfans.

L. Fan. L'honneur est contre.

Madem. Le plaisir est pour.

L. Fan. Must I then go?

Madem. Must you go?——must you eat, must you drink, must you sleep, must you live? De nature bid you do one, de nature bid you do toder. Vous me ferez enrager.

L. Fan. But when reason corrects nature, Mademoiselle—

Madem. Elle est donc bien insolente, c'est sa sœur ainée.

L. Fan. Do you then prefer your nature to your reason, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Oui da.

L. Fan. Pourquoi?

Madem. Because my nature make me merry, my reason make me mad.

L. Fan. Ah, la mèchante Françoise.

Madem. Ah, la belle Angloise.

[*Exit, forcing her Lady off.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*St James's Park.*

Enter Lady FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

L. Fan. Well, I vow, Mademoiselle, I'm strangely impatient to know who this confident fellow is.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Look, there's Heartfree. But sure it cann't be him; he's a professed woman-hater. Yet who knows what my wicked eyes may have done?

Madem. Il nous approche, matam.

L. Fan. Yes, 'tis he: now will he be most intolerably cavalier, though he should be in love with me.

Heart. Madam, I'm your humble servant; I perceive you have more humility and good-nature than I thought you had.

L. Fan. What you attribute to humility and good-nature, sir, may perhaps be only due to curiosity. I had a mind to know who 'twas had ill manners enough to write that letter.

[*Throwing him his letter.*

Heart. Well, and now I hope you are satisfied?

L. Fan. I am so, sir; good-by t'ye.

Heart. Nay, hold there; though you have done your business, I ha'n't done mine: by your ladyship's leave, we must have one moment's prattle together. Have you a mind to be the prettiest woman about town, or not? How she stares upon me! What! this passes for an impertinent question with you now, because you think you are so already.

L. Fan. Pray, sir, let me ask you a question in my turn: by what right do you pretend to examine me?

Heart. By the same right that the strong govern the weak, because I have you in my power; for you cannot get so quickly to your coach, but I shall have time enough to make you hear every thing I have to say to you.

L. Fan. These are strange liberties you take, Mr Heartfree.

Heart. They are so, madam, but there's no help for it; for know that I have a design upon you.

L. Fan. Upon me, sir?

Heart. Yes; and one that will turn to your glory and my comfort, if you will be but a little wiser than you use to be.

L. Fan. Very well, sir.

Heart. Let me see—Your vanity, madam, I take to be about some eight degrees higher than any woman's in the town, let t'other be who she will; and my indifference is naturally about the same pitch. Now, could you find the way to turn this indifference into fire and flame, methinks your

vanity ought to be satisfied; and this, perhaps, you might bring about upon pretty reasonable terms.

L. Fan. And pray at what rate would this indifference be bought off, if one should have so depraved an appetite to desire it?

Heart. Why, madam, to drive a quaker's bargain, and make but one word with you, if I do part with it, you must lay down—your affectation.

L. Fan. My affectation, sir!

Heart. Why I ask you nothing but what you may very well spare.

L. Fan. You grow rude, sir. Come, Mademoiselle, it is high time to be gone.

Madem. Allons, allons, allons!

Heart. [*Stopping them.*] Nay, you may as well stand still; for hear me you shall, walk which way you please.

L. Fan. What mean you, sir?

Heart. I mean to tell you, that you are the most ungrateful woman upon earth.

L. Fan. Ungrateful! to whom?

Heart. To nature.

L. Fan. Why, what has nature done for me?

Heart. What you have undone by art! It made you handsome: it gave you beauty to a miracle, a shape without a fault, wit enough to make them relish, and so turned you loose to your own discretion; which has made such work with you, that you are become the pity of our sex, and the jest of your own. There is not a feature in your face, but you have found the way to teach it some affected convulsion; your feet, your hands, your very fingers' ends, are directed never to move without some ridiculous air or other; and your language is a suitable trumpet, to draw people's eyes upon the raree-show.

Madem. [*Aside.*] Est ce qu' on fait l'amour en Angleterre comme ça?

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] Now could I cry for madness, but that I know he'd laugh at me for it.

Heart. Now do you hate me for telling you the truth, but that's because you don't believe 'tis so; for, were you once convinced of that, you'd reform for your own sake.

L. Fan. Every circumstance of nice breeding must needs appear ridiculous to one who has so natural an antipathy to good manners.

Heart. But, suppose I could find the means to convince you that the whole world is of my opinion?

L. Fan. Sir, though you, and all the world you talk of, should be so impertinently officious as to think to persuade me I don't know how to behave myself, I should still have charity enough for my own understanding, to believe myself in the right, and all you in the wrong.

Madem. Le voilà mort.

[*Exeunt Lady* FANCIFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Heart. [*Gazing at her.*] There her single clapper has published the sense of the whole sex. Well, this once I have endeavoured to wash the black-moor white, but henceforward I'll sooner undertake to teach sincerity to a courtier, generosity to a usurer, honesty to a lawyer, than discretion to a woman I see has once set her heart upon playing the fool.

Enter CONSTANT.

Morrow, Constant.

Con. Good morrow, Jack: What are you doing here this morning?

Heart. Doing! guess, if you can.—Why, I have been endeavouring to persuade my Lady Fanciful that she's the most foolish woman about town.

Con. A pretty endeavour truly.

Heart. I have told her, in as plain English as I could speak, both what the town says of her, and what I think of her. In short, I have used her as an absolute king would do Magna Charta.

Con. And how does she take it?

Heart. As children do pills; bite them, but cann't swallow them.

Con. But pr'ythee, what has put it into your head, of all mankind, to turn reformer?

Heart. Why, one thing was, the morning hung upon my hands, I did not know what to do with myself; and another was, that, as little as I care for women, I could not see with patience one that Heaven had taken such wondrous pains about, be so very industrious to make herself the Jack-pudding of the creation.

Con. Well, now could I almost wish to see my cruel mistress make the self-same use of what Heaven has done for her, that so I might be cured of the same disease that makes me so very uneasy; for love, love is the devil, Heart-free.

Heart. And why do you let the devil govern you?

Con. Because I have more flesh and blood than grace and self-denial. My dear, dear mistress, 'sdeath! that so genteel a woman should be a saint, when religion's out of fashion!

Heart. Nay, she's much in the wrong truly; but who knows how far time and good example may prevail?

Con. O! they have played their parts in vain already; 'tis now two years since the fellow her husband invited me to his wedding; and there was the first time I saw that charming woman, whom I have loved ever since; but she is cold, my friend, still cold as the northern star.

Heart. So are all women by nature, which makes them so willing to be warmed.

Con. O don't profane the sex; pr'ythee think them all angels for her sake; for she's virtuous even to a fault.

Heart. A lover's head is a good accountable thing truly; he adores his mistress for being virtuous, and yet is very angry with her because she won't be kind.

Con. Well, the only relief I expect in my misery, is to see thee some day or other as deeply engaged as myself, which will force me to be merry in the midst of all my misfortunes.

Heart. That day will never come, be assured, Ned: not but that I can pass a night with a wo-

man, and for the time, perhaps, make myself as good sport as you can do. Nay, I can court a woman too, call her nymph, angel, goddess, what you please: but here's the difference between you and I; I persuade a woman she's an angel, and she persuades you she's one. But pr'ythee let me tell you how I avoid falling in love; that which serves me for prevention, may chance to serve you for a cure.

Con. Well, use the ladies moderately then, and I'll hear you.

Heart. That using them moderately undoes us all: but I'll use them justly, and that you ought to be satisfied with. I always consider a woman, not as the tailor, the shoe-maker, the tire-woman, the semstress, and (which is more than all that) the poet makes her; but I consider her as pure nature has contrived her, and that more strictly than I should have done our old grandmother Eve, had I seen her naked in the garden; for I consider her turned inside out. Her heart well examined, I find there pride, vanity, covetousness, indiscretion, but, above all things, malice: plots eternally forging to destroy one another's reputations, and as honestly to charge the levity of men's tongues with the scandal; hourly debates how to make poor gentlemen in love with them, with no other intent but to use them like dogs when they have done; a constant desire of doing more mischief, and an everlasting war waged against truth and good-nature.

Con. Very well, sir; an admirable composition, truly!

Heart. Then for her outside, I consider it merely as an outside; she has a thin tiffany covering; just over such stuff as you and I are made on. As for her motion, her mien, her airs, and all those tricks, I know they affect you mightily. If you should see your mistress at a coronation, dragging her peacock's train, with all her state and insolence about her, 'twould strike you with all the awful thoughts that Heaven itself could pretend to forur you: whereas I turn the whole matter into a jest, and suppose her strutting in the self-same stately manner, with nothing on but her stays, and her scanty quilted under-petticoat.

Con. Hold thy profane tongue; for I'll hear no more!

Heart. What, you'll love on then?

Con. Yes.

Heart. Yet have no hopes at all?

Con. None.

Heart. Nay, the resolution may be discreet enough; perhaps you have found out some new philosophy, that love, like virtue, is its own reward: so you and your mistress will be as well content at a distance, as others that have less learning are in coming together.

Con. No; but if she should prove kind at last, my dear Heartfree? [*Embracing him.*

Heart. Nay, pr'ythee don't take me for your mistress; for lovers are very troublesome.

Con. Well, who knows what time may do?

Heart. And just now he was sure time could do nothing.

Con. Yet not one kind glance in two years is somewhat strange.

Heart. Not strange at all; she don't like you, that's all the business.

Con. Pr'ythee don't distract me.

Heart. Nay, you are a good handsome young fellow; she might use you better. Come, will you go see her? perhaps she may have changed her mind; there's some hopes, as long as she's a woman.

Con. O, 'tis in vain to visit her: sometimes to get a sight of her, I visit that beast her husband, but she certainly finds some pretence to quit the room as soon as I enter.

Heart. It's much she don't tell him you have made love to her too; for that's another good-natured thing usual amongst women, in which they have several ends. Sometimes 'tis to recommend their virtue, that they may be kind with the greater security. Sometimes 'tis to make their husbands fight, in hopes they may be killed, when their affairs require it should be so: but most commonly 'tis to engage two men in a quarrel, that they may have the credit of being fought for; and if the lover's killed in the business, they cry, Poor fellow, he had ill luck!—and so they go to cards.

Con. Thy injuries to women are not to be forgiven. Look to't, if ever you fall into their hands—

Heart. They cann't use me worse than they do you, that speak well of 'em. O ho! here comes the knight.

Enter Sir JOHN BRUTE.

Heart. Your humble servant, Sir John.

Sir John. Servant, sir.

Heart. How does all your family?

Sir John. Pox on my family!

Con. How does your lady? I ha'n't seen her abroad a good while.

Sir John. Do! I don't know how she does, not I; she was well enough yesterday; I ha'n't been at home to-night.

Con. What, were you out of town?

Sir John. Out of town! No, I was drinking.

Con. You are a true Englishman; don't know your own happiness. If I were married to such a woman, I would not be from her a night for all the wine in France.

Sir John. Not from her!—'Oons—what a time should a man have of that!

Heart. Why, there's no division, I hope.

Sir John. No; but there's a conjunction, and that's worse; a pox of the parson—why the plague don't you two marry? I fancy I look like the devil to you.

Heart. Why, you don't think you have horns, do you?

Sir John. No, I believe my wife's religion will keep her honest.

Heart. And what will make her keep her religion?

Sir John. Persecution; and therefore she shall have it.

Heart. Have a care, knight, women are tender things.

Sir John. And yet, methinks, 'tis a hard matter to break their hearts.

Con. Fie, fie! you have one of the best wives in the world, and yet you seem the most uneasy husband.

Sir John. Best wives!—the woman's well enough; she has no vice that I know of; but she's a wife, and—damn a wife! if I were married to a hogshead of claret, matrimony would make me hate it.

Heart. Why did you marry then? you were old enough to know your own mind.

Sir John. Why did I marry! I married because I had a mind to lay with her, and she would not let me.

Heart. Why did you not ravish her?

Sir John. Yes; and so have hedged myself into forty quarrels with her relations, besides buying my pardon: but, more than all that, you must know I was afraid of being damned in those days, for I kept sneaking, cowardly company, fellows that went to church, said grace to their meat, and had not the least tincture of quality about them.

Heart. But I think you have got into a better gang now.

Sir John. Zoons, sir, my Lord Rake and I are hand and glove: I believe we may get our bones broke together to-night. Have you a mind to share a frolic?

Con. Not I, truly; my talent lies in softer exercises.

Sir John. What, a down bed and a strumpet? A pox of venery, I say. Will you come and drink with me this afternoon?

Con. I cann't drink to-day; but we'll come and sit an hour with you if you will.

Sir John. Pough, pox, sit an hour! Why cann't you drink?

Con. Because I'm to see my mistress.

Sir John. Who's that?

Con. Why do you use to tell?

Sir John. Yes.

Con. So won't I.

Sir John. Why?

Con. Because it is a secret.

Sir John. Would my wife knew it, 'twould be no secret long.

Con. Why, do you think she cann't keep a secret?

Sir John. No more than she could keep Lent.

Heart. Pr'ythee, tell it her to try, Constant.

Sir John. No, pr'ythee don't, that I mayn't be plagued with it.

Con. I'll hold you a guinea you don't make her tell it you.

Sir John. I'll hold you a guinea I do.

Con. Which way?

Sir John. Why, I'll beg her not to tell it me.

Heart. Nay, if any thing does it, that will.

Con. But do you think, sir——

Sir John. 'Oons, sir, I think a woman and a secret are the two impertinentest themes in the universe: therefore, pray let's hear no more of my wife nor your mistress. Damn 'em both with all my heart, and every thing else that daggles a petticoat, except four generous whores who are drunk with my Lord Rake and I ten times in a fortnight. [*Exit.*

Con. Here's a dainty fellow for you! and the veriest coward too. But his usage of his wife makes me ready to stab the villain.

Heart. Lovers are short-sighted; all their senses run into that of feeling. This proceeding of his is the only thing on earth can make your fortune. If any thing can prevail with her to accept a gallant, 'tis his usage of her. Pr'ythee, take heart; I have great hopes for you; and, since I cann't bring you quite off her, I'll endeavour to bring you quite on; for a whining lover is the damnest companion on earth.

Con. My dear friend, flatter me a little more with these hopes; for whilst they prevail, I have Elysium within me, and could melt with joy.

Heart. Pray, no melting yet; let things go farther first. This afternoon, perhaps, we shall make some advance. In the mean while, let's go dine at Locket's, and let hope get you a stomach. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Lady* FANCYFUL'S *House.*

Enter Lady FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

L. Fan. Did you ever see any think so importune, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Indeed, matam, to say de trute, he want leetel good-breeding.

L. Fan. Good-breeding! He wants to be caned, Mademoiselle. An insolent fellow! and yet, let me expose my weakness, 'tis the only man on earth I could resolve to dispense my favours on, were he but a fine gentleman. Well, did men but know how deep an impression a fine gentleman makes in a lady's heart, they would reduce all their studies to that of good-breeding alone.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Will your ladyship please to dine yet?

L. Fan. Yes, let 'em serve. [*Exit Serv.*] Sure this Heartfree has betwitched me, Mademoiselle. You cann't imagine how oddly he mixt himself in my thoughts during my rapture e'en now. I vow 'tis a thousand pities he is not more polished; don't you think so?

Madem. Matam, I think it is so great pity, that, if I was in your ladyship's place, I take him home in my house, I lock him up in my closet, and I never let him go, till I teach him every ting dat fine lady expect from fine gentleman.

L. Fan. Why truly, I believe I should soon subdue his brutality; for, without doubt, he has a strange penchant to grow fond of me, in spite of his aversion to the sex, else he would ne'er have taken so much pains about me. Lord, how proud would some poor creatures be of such a conquest! but I, alas! I don't know how to receive as a favour, what I take to be so infinitely

my due. But what shall I do to new mould him, Mademoiselle; for, till then, he's my utter aversion?

Madem. Matem, you must laugh at him in all de places dat you meet him, and turn into de ridicule all he say and all he do.

L. Fan. Why truly, satire has ever been of wondrous use to reform ill manners. Besides, 'tis my particular talent to ridicule folks. I can be severe, strangely severe, when I will Mademoiselle—Give me the pen and ink—I find myself whimsical—I'll write to him—or I'll let it alone, and be severe upon him that way. [*Sitting down to write, rising up again.*]—Yet active severity is better than passive. [*Sitting down.*]—'Tis as good to let it alone too: for every lash I give him, perhaps he'll take for a favour.—[*Rising.*] Yet 'tis a thousand pities so much satire should be lost. [*Sitting.*]—But if it should have a wrong effect upon him, 'twould distract me. [*Rising.*]—Well, I must write though, after all, [*Sitting.*]—or I'll let it alone, which is the same thing. [*Rising.*]

Madem. La voilà determinée. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Opens and discovers Sir* JOHN, *Lady* BRUTE, *and* BELINDA, *rising from the table.*

Sir John. Here; take away the things: I expect company. But first bring me a pipe; I'll smoke. [*To a Servant.*]

L. Brute. Lord, Sir John, I wonder you won't leave off that nasty custom.

Sir John. Pr'ythee don't be impertinent.

Bel. [*To L.* BRUTE.] I wonder who those are he expects this afternoon.

L. Brute. I'd give the world to know. Perhaps 'tis Constant; he comes here sometimes; if it does prove him, I'm resolved I'll share the visit.

Bel. We'll send for our work and sit here.

L. Brute. He'll choke us with his tobacco.

Bel. Nothing will choke us when we are doing what we have a mind to. Lovewell——

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. Madam.

L. Brute. Here; bring my cousin's work and mine hither.

[*Exit* LOVE., *and re-enters with their work.*

Sir John. Why, pox, cann't you work somewhere else?

L. Brute. We shall be careful not to disturb you, sir.

Bel. Your pipe would make you too thoughtful, uncle, if you were left alone; our prittle prattle will cure your spleen.

Sir John. Will it so, Mrs Pert? Now I believe it will so increase it, [*Sitting and smoking.*] I shall take my own house for a paper-mill.

L. Brute [*To* BEL. *aside.*] Don't let's mind him; let him say what he will.

Sir John. A woman's tongue a cure for the spleen! 'oons—[*Aside.*] if a man had got the head-ach, they'd be for applying the same remedy.

L. Brute. You have done a great deal, Belinda, since yesterday.

Bel. Yes, I have worked very hard; how do you like it?

L. Brute. O! 'tis the prettiest fringe in the world. Well, cousin, you have the happiest fancy: pr'ythee advise me about altering my crimson petticoat.

Sir John. A pox o' your petticoat! here's such a prating, a man cann't digest his own thoughts for you.

L. Brute. Don't answer him. [*Aside.*]—Well, what do you advise me?

Bel. Why, really, I would not alter it at all. Methinks 'tis very pretty as it is.

L. Brute. Ay, that's true: but you know one grows weary of the prettiest things in the world, when one has had 'em long.

Sir John. Yes, I have taught her that.

Bel. Shall we provoke him a little?

L. Brute. With all my heart. Belinda, don't you long to be married?

Bel. Why, there are some things in it which I could like well enough.

L. Brute. What do you think you should dislike?

Bel. My husband, a hundred to one else.

L. Brute. O ye wicked wretch! Sure you don't speak as you think?

Bel. Yes I do: especially if he smoked tobacco. [*He looks earnestly at them.*

L. Brute. Why, that many times takes off worse smells.

Bel. Then he must smell very ill indeed.

L. Brute. So some men will, to keep their wives from coming near them.

Bel. Then those wives should cuckold 'em at a distance. [*He rises in a fury, throws his pipe at them, and drives them out.*

As they run off, enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE; *Lady* BRUTE *runs against* CONSTANT.

Sir John. 'Oons, get you gone up stairs, you confederating strumpets you, or I'll cuckold you, with a vengeance!

L. Brute. O lord, he'll beat us, he'll beat us! Dear, dear Mr Constant, save us!

[*Exeunt L.* BRUTE *and* BEL.

Sir John. I'll cuckold you, with a pox!

Con. Heaven! Sir John, what's the matter?

Sir John. Sure, if women had been ready cre-

ated, the devil, instead of being kicked down into hell, had been married.

Heart. Why, what new plagues have you found now?

Sir John. Why, these two gentlewomen did but hear me say I expected you here this afternoon; upon which, they presently resolved to take up the room, o' purpose to plague me and my friends.

Con. Was that all? Why, we should have been glad of their company.

Sir John. Then I should have been weary of yours; for I cann't relish both together. They found fault with my smoking tobacco too, and said men stunk. But I have a good mind—to say something.

Con. No, nothing against the ladies, pray.

Sir John. Split the ladies! Come, will you sit down?—Give us some wine, fellow.—You won't smoke!

Con. No, nor drink neither, at this time; I must ask your pardon.

Sir John. What? this mistress of yours runs in your head; I'll warrant it's some such squeamish minx as my wife, that's grown so dainty of late, she finds fault even with a dirty shirt.

Heart. That a woman may do, and not be very dainty neither.

Sir John. Pox o' the women! let's drink. Come, you shall take one glass, though I send for a box of lozenges to sweeten your mouth after it.

Con. Nay, if one glass will satisfy you, I'll drink it, without putting you to that expence.

Sir John. Why, that's honest. Fill some wine, sirrah. So, here's to you, gentlemen.—A wife's the devil.—To your both being married.

[*They drink.*

Heart. O, your most humble servant, sir.

Sir John. Well, how do you like my wine?

Con. 'Tis very good, indeed.

Heart. 'Tis admirable.

Sir John. Then give us t'other glass.

Con. No, pray excuse us now: we'll come another time, and then we won't spare it.

Sir John. This one glass, and no more. Come, it shall be your mistress's health; and that's a great compliment from me, I assure you.

Con. And 'tis a very obliging one to me; so give us the glasses.

Sir John. So; let her live——

[*He coughs in the glass.*

Heart. And be kind.

Con. What's the matter? Does it go the wrong way?

Sir John. If I had love enough to be jealous, I should take this for an ill omen: for I never drank my wife's health in my life, but I puked in my glass.

Con. O she's too virtuous to make any reasonable man jealous.

Sir John. Pox of her virtue! If I could catch her adulterating, I might be divorced from her by law.

Heart. And so pay her a yearly pension, to be a distinguish'd cuckold.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, there's my Lord Rake, Colonel Bully, and some other gentlemen, at the Blue Posts, desire your company.

Sir John. God's so, we are to consult about playing the devil to-night.

Heart. Well, we won't hinder business.

Sir John. Methinks I don't know how to leave you too: but for once I must make bold. Or, look you—may be the conference mayn't last long! So, if you'll wait here half an hour, or an hour, if I don't come then—why then—I won't come at all.

Heart. [*To* CONSTANT.] A good modest proposition, truly. [*Aside*

Con. But let's accept on't, however. Who knows what may happen?

Heart. Well, sir, to shew you how fond we are of your company, we'll expect your return as long as we can.

Sir John. Nay, may be I mayn't stay at all: but business, you know, must be done. So, your servant. Or, hark you, if you have a mind to take a frisk with us, I have an interest with my lord; I can easily introduce you.

Con. We are much beholden to you; but, for my part, I'm engaged another way.

Sir John. What! to your mistress, I'll warrant? Pr'ythee leave your nasty punk to entertain herself with her own wicked thoughts, and make one with us to-night.

Con. Sir, 'tis business that is to employ me.

Heart. And me; and business must be done, you know.

Sir John. Ay, women's business, though the world were consumed for't. [*Exit.*

Con. Farewell, beast; and now, my dear friend, would my mistress be but as complaisant as some men's wives, who think it a piece of good-breeding to receive the visits of their husbands' friends in his absence.——

Heart. Why, for your sake, I could forgive her, though she should be so complaisant to receive something else in his absence. But what way shall we invent to see her?

Con. O ne'er hope it; invention will prove as vain as wishes.

Enter Lady BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

Heart. What do you think now, friend?

Con. I think I shall swoon.

Heart. I'll speak first, then, while you fetch breath.

L. Brute. We think ourselves obliged, gentlemen, to come and return you thanks for your knight-errantry. We were just upon being devour'd by the fiery dragon.

Bel. Did not his fumes almost knock you down, gentlemen?

Heart. Truly, ladies, we did undergo some hardships; and should have done more, if some

greater heroes than ourselves, hard by, had not diverted him.

Con. Though I am glad of the service you are pleased to say we have done you, yet I'm sorry we could do it in no other way, than by making ourselves privy to what you would perhaps have kept a secret.

L. Brute. For Sir John's part, I suppose he designed it no secret, since he made so much noise. And for myself, truly, I'm not so much concerned, since 'tis fallen only into this gentleman's hand and yours; who, I have many reasons to believe, will neither interpret, nor report, any thing to my disadvantage.

Con. Your good opinion, madam, was what I fear'd I never could have merited.

L. Brute. Your fears were vain then, sir: for I'm just to every body.

Heart. Pr'ythee, Constant, what is't you do to get the ladies' good opinion; for I'm a novice at it.

Bel. Sir, will you give me leave to instruct ou?

Heart. Yes, that I will, with all my soul, madam.

Bel. Why then, you must never be a sloven; never be out of humour; never smoke tobacco; nor drink, but when you are dry.

Heart. That's hard.

Con. Nay, if you take his bottle from him, you break his heart, madam.

Bel. Why, is it possible the gentleman can love drinking?

Heart. Only by way of antidote.

Bel. Against what, pray?

Heart. Against love, madam.

L. Brute. Are you afraid of being in love, sir?

Heart. I should, if there were any danger of it.

L. Brute. Pray, why so?

Heart. Because I always had an aversion to being used like a dog.

Bel. Why, truly, men in love are seldom used better.

L. Brute. But was you never in love, sir?

Heart. No, I thank Heaven, madam.

Bel. Pray, where got you your learning then?

Heart. From other people's expence

Bel. That's being a spunger, sir, which is scarce honest: if you'd buy some experience with your own money, as 'twould be fairlier got, so 'twould stick longer by you.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Madam, here's my Lady Fancyful, to wait upon your ladyship.

L. Brute. Shield me, kind Heaven! What an inundation of impertinence is here coming upon us!

Enter Lady FANCYFUL, *who runs first to Lady* BRUTE, *then to* BELINDA, *kissing them.*

L. Fan. My dear Lady Brute, and sweet Belinda, methinks 'tis an age since I saw you.

L. Brute. Yet 'tis but three days; sure you have pass'd your time very ill, it seems so long to you.

L. Fan. Why really, to confess the truth to you, I am so everlastingly fatigued with the addresses of unfortunate gentlemen, that, were it not for the extravagancy of the example, I should e'en tear out these wicked eyes with my own fingers, to make both myself and mankind easy. What think you on't, Mr Heartfree, for I take you to be my faithful adviser?

Heart. Why, truly, madam—I think every project that is for the good of mankind ought to be encouraged.

L. Fan. Then I have your consent, sir?

Heart. To do whatever you please, madam.

L. Fan. You had a much more limited complaisance this morning, sir. Would you believe it, ladies? The gentleman has been so exceeding generous, to tell me of above fifty faults in less time than it was well possible for me to commit two of them.

Con. Why, truly, madam, my friend there is apt to be something familiar with the ladies.

L. Fan. He is indeed, sir; but he's wondrous charitable with it: he has had the goodness to design a reformation, e'en down to my fingers' ends.——'Twas thus, I think, sir, [*Opening her fingers in an awkward manner.*] you'd have 'em stand—My eyes too he did not like. How was't you would have directed 'em? Thus I think. [*Staring at him.*]—Then there was something amiss in my gait too: I don't know well how 'twas; but, as I take it, he would have me walk like him. Pray, sir, do me the favour to take a turn or two about the room, that the company may see you. He's sullen, ladies, and won't. But, to make short, and give you as true an idea as I can of the matter, I think 'twas much about this figure in general he would have moulded me to: but I was an obstinate woman, and could not resolve to make myself mistress of his heart, by growing as awkward as his fancy.

[*She walks awkwardly about, staring and looking ungainly, then changes on a sudden to the extremity of her usual affectation.*

Heart. Just thus women do, when they think we are in love with 'em, or when they are so with us. [*Here* CONSTANT *and Lady* BRUTE *talk together apart.*

L. Fan. 'Twould, however, be less vanity for me to conclude the former, than you the latter, sir.

Heart. Madam, all I shall presume to conclude, is, that if I were in love, you'd find the means to make me soon weary on't.

L. Fan. Not by over-fondness, upon my word, sir. But pr'ythee let's stop here; for you are so much governed by instinct, I know you'll grow brutish at last.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Now am I sure she's fond of him: I'll try to make her jealous. Well, for my part, I should be glad to find somebody would be

so free with me, that I might know my faults, and mend 'em.

L. Fan. Then pray let me recommend this gentleman to you: I have known him some time, and will be surety for him, that, upon a very limited encouragement on your side, you shall find an extended impudence on his.

Heart. I thank you, madam, for your recommendation: but, hating idleness, I am unwilling to enter into a place where I believe there would be nothing to do. I was fond of serving your ladyship, because I knew you'd find me constant employment.

L. Fan. I told you he'd be rude, Belinda.

Bel. O, a little bluntness is a sign of honesty, which makes me always ready to pardon it. So, sir, if you have no other objection to my service, but the fear of being idle in it, you may venture to list yourself: I shall find you work, I warrant you.

Heart. Upon those terms I engage, madam; and this, with your leave, I take for earnest.

[*Offers to kiss her hand.*

Bel. Hold there, sir; I'm none of your earnest-givers. But, if I'm well served, I give good wages, and pay punctually.

[HEARTFREE *and* BELINDA *seem to continue talking familiarly together.*

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] I don't like this jesting between 'em—Methinks the fool begins to look as if he were in earnest, but then he must be a fool indeed—Lard, what a difference there is between me and her! [*Looking at* BELINDA *scornfully.*] How I should despise such a thing if I were a man!—What a nose she has—what a chin—what a neck—Then her eyes—and the worst kissing lips in the universe—No, no, he can never like her, that's positive—Yet I cann't suffer 'em together any longer. Mr Heartfree, do you know that you and I must have no quarrel for all this? I cann't forbear being a little severe now and then; but women, you know, may be allowed any thing.

Heart. Up to a certain age, madam.

L. Fan. Which I'm not yet past, I hope.

Heart. [*Aside.*] Nor never will, I dare swear.

L. Fan. [*To L.* BRUTE.] Come, madam, will your ladyship be witness to our reconciliation?

L. Brute. You are agreed then at last.

Heart. [*Slightingly.*] We forgive.

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] That was a cold, ill-natured reply.

L. Brute. Then there's no challenges sent between you?

Heart. Not from me, I promise. [*Aside to* CONSTANT.] But that's more than I'll do for her; for I know she can as well be hanged as forbear writing to me.

Con. That I believe. But I think we had best be going, lest she should suspect something, and be malicious.

Heart. With all my heart.

Con. Ladies, we are your humble servants. I see Sir John is quite engaged; 'twould be in vain to expect him. Come, Heartfree. [*Exit.*

Heart. Ladies, your servant. [*To* BELINDA.] I hope, madam, you won't forget our bargain; I'm to say what I please to you? [*Exit.*

Bel. Liberty of speech entire, sir.

L. Fan. [*Aside.*] Very pretty, truly—But how the blockhead went out languishing at her; and not a look towards me—Well, people may talk, but miracles are not ceased. For 'tis more than natural, such a rude fellow as he, and such a little impertinent as she, should be capable of making a woman of my sphere uneasy. But I can bear her sight no longer—methinks, she's grown ten times uglier than Cornet. I must home and study revenge. [*To Lady* BRUTE.] Madam, your humble servant; I must take my leave.

L. Brute. What, going already, madam?

L. Fan. I must beg you'll excuse me this once; for really I have eighteen visits to return this afternoon: so you see I'm importuned by the women as well as the men.

Bel. [*Aside.*] And she's quits with them both.

L. Fan. [*Going.*] Nay, you sha'n't go one step out of the room.

L. Brute. Indeed I'll wait upon you down.

L. Fan. No, sweet Lady Brute, you know I swoon at ceremony.

L. Brute. Pray give me leave.

L. Fan. You know I won't.

L. Brute. Indeed I must.

L. Fan. Indeed you sha'n't.

L. Brute. Indeed I will.

L. Fan. Indeed you sha'n't.

L. Brute. Indeed I will.

L. Fan. Indeed you sha'n't; indeed, indeed, indeed, you sha'n't.

[*Exit, running; they follow.*

Re-enter Lady BRUTE, *sola.*

L. Brute. This impertinent woman has put me out of humour for a fortnight——What an agreeable moment has her foolish visit interrupted! Lord, what a pleasure there is in doing what we should not do!

Re-enter CONSTANT.

Ha! here again!

Con. Though the renewing my visit may seem a little irregular, I hope I shall obtain your pardon for it, madam, when you know I only left the room, lest the lady who was here should have been as malicious in her remarks as she is foolish in her conduct.

L. Brute. He who has discretion enough to be tender of a woman's reputation, carries a virtue about him that may atone for a great many faults.

Con. If it has a title to atone for any, its pretensions must needs be strongest where the crime is love. I therefore hope I shall be forgiven the attempt I have made upon your heart, since my enterprise has been a secret to all the world but yourself.

L. Brute. Secrecy indeed, in sins of this kind, is an argument of weight to lessen the punishment: but nothing's a plea for a pardon entire, without a sincere repentance.

Con. If sincerity in repentance consists in sorrow for offending, no cloister ever inclosed so true a penitent as I should be. But I hope it cannot be reckoned on offence to love, where it is a duty to adore.

L. Brute. 'Tis an offence, a great one, where it would rob a woman of all she ought to be adored for—her virtue.

Con. Virtue!—That phantom of honour, which men in every age have so condemned; they have thrown it amongst the women to scramble for.

L. Brute. If it be a thing of so very little value, why do you so earnestly recommend it to your wives and daughters?

Con. We recommend it to our wives, madam, because we would keep 'em to ourselves; and to our daughters, because we would dispose of 'em to others.

L. Brute. 'Tis then of some importance, it seems, since you cann't dispose of them without it.

Con. That importance, madam, lies in the humour of the country, not in the nature of the thing. Pray what does your ladyship think of a powdered coat for deep mourning?

L. Brute. I think, sir, your sophistry has all the effect that you can reasonably expect it should have: it puzzles, but don't convince.

Con. I'm sorry for it.

L. Brute. I'm sorry to hear you say so.

Con. Pray why?

L. Brute. Because, if you expected more from it, you have a worse opinion of my understanding than I desire you should have.

Con. [*Aside.*] I comprehend her: she would have me set a value upon her chastity, that I might think myself the more obliged to her when she makes me a present of it. [*To her.*] I beg you will believe I did but rally, madam; I know you judge too well of right and wrong, to be deceived by arguments like those. And I hope you will have so favourable an opinion of my understanding too, to believe the thing called virtue has worth enough with me, to pass for an eternal obligation where'er 'tis sacrificed.

L. Brute. It is, I think, so great a one, as nothing can repay.

Con. Yes; the making the man you love your everlasting debtor.

L. Brute. When debtors once have borrowed all we have to lend, they are very apt to grow shy of their creditor's company.

Con. That, madam, is only when they are forced to borrow of usurers, and not of a generous friend. Let us choose our creditors, and we are seldom so ungrateful as to shun 'em.

L. Brute. What think you of Sir John, sir? I was his free choice.

Con. I think he's married, madam.

L. Brute. Does marriage then exclude men from your rule of constancy?

Con. It does. Constancy's a brave, free, haughty, generous agent, that cannot buckle to the chains of wedlock.

L. Brute. Have you no exceptions to this general rule as well as t'other?

Con. Yes, I would, after all, be an exception to it myself, if you were free in power and will to make me so.

L. Brute. Compliments are well placed, where 'tis impossible to lay hold on 'em.

Con. I would to Heaven 'twere possible for you to lay hold on mine, that you might see it is no compliment at all, But, since you are already disposed of, beyond redemption, to one who does not know the value of the jewel you have put into his hands, I hope you would not think him greatly wronged, though it should sometimes be looked on by a friend who knows how to esteem it as he ought.

L. Brute. If looking on't alone would serve his turn, the wrong perhaps might not be very great.

Con. Why, what if he should wear it now and then a day, so he gave good security to bring it home again at night?

L. Brute. Small security, I fancy, might serve for that. One might venture to take his word.

Con. Then where's the injury to the owner?

L. Brute. 'Tis an injury to him, if he thinks it is one. For if happiness be seated in the mind, unhappiness must be so too.

Con. Here I close with you, madam, and draw my conclusive argument from your own position: If the injury lie in the fancy, there needs nothing but secrecy to prevent the wrong.

L. Brute. [*Going*] A surer way to prevent it, is to hear no more arguments in its behalf.

Con. [*Following her.*] But, madam—

L. Brute. But, sir, 'tis my turn to be discreet now, and not suffer too long a visit.

Con. [*Catching her hand.*] By Heaven, you shall not stir, till you give me hopes that I shall see you again at some more convenient time and place!

L. Brute. I give you just hopes enough—[*Breaking from him.*] to get loose from you; and that's all I can afford you at this time.

[*Exit running.*

Con. Now, by all that's great and good, she's a charming woman. In what exstasy of joy she has left me! For she gave me hope. Did she not say she gave me hope?—Hope! Ay, what hope?—enough to make me let her go—Why, that's enough in conscience. Or, no matter how 'twas spoke; hope was the word; it came from her, and it was said to me.

Enter HEARTFREE.

Ha, Heartfree! thou hast done me noble service in prattling to the young gentlewoman without there: come to my arms, thou venerable bawd, and let me squeeze thee [*Embracing him eagerly.*] as a new pair of stays does a fat country girl, when she's carried to court to stand for a maid of honour!

Heart. Why, what the devil's all this rapture for?

Con. Rapture! there's ground for rapture, man! There's hopes, my Heartfree—hopes, my friend.

Heart. Hopes! of what?

Con. Why, hopes that my lady and I together, (for 'tis more than one body's work) should make Sir John a cuckold.

Heart. Pr'ythee, what did she say to thee?

Con. Say! What did she not say? she said that—says she—she said—Zoons, I don't know what she said; but she looked as if she said every thing I'd have her; and so, if thou'lt go to the tavern, I'll treat thee with any thing that gold can buy; I'll give all my silver among the drawers, make a bonfire before the doors; swear that the pope's turned protestant, and that all the politicians in England are of one mind. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Opens, and discovers Lord* RAKE, *Sir* JOHN, *&c. at a table, drinking.*

All Huzza!

L. Rake. Come, boys, charge again—so—confusion to all order. Here's liberty of conscience.

All. Huzza!

L. Rake. Come, sing the song I made this morning, to this purpose.

Sir John. 'Tis wicked, I hope.

L. Rake. Don't I tell you that I made it?

Sir John. My lord, I beg your pardon for suspecting you of any virtue. Come, begin.

SONG.

By Colonel BULLY.

We're gaily yet, we're gaily yet,
And we're not very fow, but we're gaily yet.
Then sit ye a while, and tipple a bit,
For we's not very fow, but we're gaily yet,
And we're gaily yet, &c. &c.

There was a lad, and they ca'd him Dicky,
He ga' me a kiss, and I bit his lippy,
Then under my apron he sheued me a trick;
And we's not very fow, but we're gaily yet,
And we're gaily yet, &c. &c.

There were three luds, and they were clad,
There were three lasses, and them they had.
Three trees in the orchard are newly sprung,
And we's a' get geer enough, we're but young.
And we're gaily yet, &c. &c.

Then up went Ailey, Ailey, up went Ailey now;
Then up with Ailey, quo' Crumma, we's get a' roaring fow.
And one was kissed in the barn, another was kissed on the green,
And t'other behind the pease-stack, till the mow flew up to her eyn.
Then up went Ailey, Ailey, &c. &c.

Now fie, John Thomson, run,
Gin ever you run in your life,
De'il get ye; but hye, my dear Jack,
There's a man got to bed with your wife,
Then up went Ailey, &c. &c.

Then away John Thomson ran,
And 'egad he ran with speed,
But before he had run his length,
The false loon had done the deed.
Then up went Ailey, &c. &c.

L. Rake. Well, how do you like it, gentlemen?

All. O, admirable!

Sir John. I would not give a fig for a song that is not full of sin and impudence.

L. Rake. Then my muse is to your taste. But drink away! the night steals upon us; we shall want time to be lewd in. Hey, page! sally out, sirrah, and see what's doing in the camp: we'll beat up their quarters presently.

Page. I'll bring your lordship an exact account. [*Exit.*

L. Rake. Now let the spirit of Clary go round. Here's to our forlorn hope. Courage, knight! victory attends you.

Sir John. And laurels shall crown me. Drink away, and be damned.

L. Rake. Again, boys; t'other glass, and no morality.

Sir John. [*Drunk.*] Ay—no morality—and damn the watch; and let the constable be married.

All. Huzza!

Re-enter Page.

L. Rake. How are the streets inhabited, sirrah?

Page. My lord, it's Sunday night; they are full of drunken citizens.

L. Rake. Along then, boys, we shall have a feast.

Col. Along, noble knight.

Sir John. Ay—along, Bully; and he that says Sir John Brute is not as drunk, and as religious as the drunkenest citizen of them all, is a liar, and the son of a whore.

Col. Why, that was bravely spoke, and like a free-born Englishman.

Sir John. What's that to you, sir, whether I am an Englishman or a Frenchman?

Col. Zoons, you are not angry, sir?

Sir John. Zoons, I am angry, sir—for if I am a freeborn Englishman, what have you to do, even to talk of my privileges?

L. Rake. Why, pr'ythee, knight, don't quarrel here; leave private animosities to be decided by day-light; let the night be employed against the public enemy.

Sir John. My lord, I respect you, because you are a man of quality. But I'll make that fellow know I'm within a hair's breadth as absolute by my privileges, as the king of France is by his prerogative. He, by his prerogative, takes money where it is not his due; I, by my privilege, refuse paying it where I owe it. Liberty and property, and old England! Huzza!

All. Huzza!

[*Exit Sir* JOHN *reeling, all following.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Bed Chamber.*

Enter Lady BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

L. Brute. Sure it's late, Belinda, I begin to be sleepy.

Bel. Yes, 'tis near twelve. Will you go to bed?

L. Brute. To bed, my dear! And by that time I am fallen into a sweet sleep, (or perhaps a sweet dream, which is better and better) Sir John will come home roaring drunk, and be overjoyed he finds me in a condition to be disturbed.

Bel. O, you need not fear him, he's in for all night. The servants say he's gone to drink with my Lord Rake.

L. Brute. Nay, 'tis not very likely, indeed, such suitable company should part presently. What hogs men turn to, Belinda, when they grow weary of women.

Bel. And what owls they are whilst they are fond of 'em.

L. Brute. But that we may forgive well enough, because they are so upon our accounts. But, pr'ythee, one word of poor Constant before we go to bed, if it be but to furnish matter for dreams. I dare swear he's talking of me now, or thinking of me at least.

Bel. So he ought, I think; for you were pleased to make him a good round advance today, madam.

L. Brute. Why, I have e'en plagued him enough, to satisfy any reasonable woman: he has besieged me these two years to no purpose.

Bel. And if he besieged you two years more, he'd be well enough paid, so he had the plundering of you at last.

L. Brute. That may be; but I'm afraid the town won't be able to hold out much longer: for, to confess the truth to you, Belinda, the garrison begins to grow mutinous.

Bel. Then the sooner you capitulate the better.

L. Brute. Yet methinks I would fain stay a little longer to see you fix'd too, that we might start together, and see who could love longest. What think you, if Heartfree should have a month's mind to you?

Bel. Why, I could almost be in love with him for despising that foolish, affected Lady Fancyful; but I'm afraid he's too cold ever to warm himself by my fire.

L. Brute. Then he deserves to be frozen to death. Would I were a man for your sake, dear rogue! [*Kissing her.*

Bel. You'd wish yourself a woman for your own, or the men are mistaken. But if I could make a conquest of this son of Bacchus, and rival his bottle, what should I do with him? He has no fortune, I cann't marry him; and sure you would not have me do I don't know what with him.

L. Brute. Why, if you did, child, 'twould be but a good friendly part; if 'twere only to keep me in countenance, whilst I play the fool with Constant.

Bel. Well, if I cann't resolve to serve you that way, I may perhaps some other, as much to your satisfaction. But, pray, how shall we contrive to see these blades again quickly?

L. Brute. We must e'en have recourse to the old way; make 'em an appointment 'twixt jest and earnest; 'twill look like a frolic, and that, you know, is a very good thing to save a woman's blushes.

Bel. You advise well; but where shall it be?

L. Brute. In Spring-Garden. But they sha'n't know their women till they pull off their masks; for a surprise is the most agreeable thing in the world; and I find myself in a very good humour, ready to do 'em any good turn I can think on.

Bel. Then pray write 'em the necessary billet without farther delay.

L. Brute. Let's go into your chamber then, and, whilst you undress, I'll do it, child. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Covent-Garden.*

Enter Lord RAKE, *Sir* JOHN *and Colonel* BULLY, *with their swords drawn.*

L. Rake. Is the dog dead?

Col. No, damn him, I heard him wheeze.

L. Rake. How the witch his wife howled.

Col. Ay, she'll alarm the watch presently.

L. Rake. Appear, knight, then; come, you have a good cause to fight for; there's a man murdered.

Sir John. Is there? then let his ghost be satisfied; for I'll sacrifice a constable to it presently, and burn his body upon his wooden chair.

Enter a Tailor, with a bundle under his arm.

Col. How now? what have we got here? a thief!

Tai. No, an't please you, I'm no thief.

L. Rake. That we'll see presently. Here; let the general examine him.

Sir John. Ay, ay, let me examine him, and I'll lay a hundred pounds I find him guilty in spite of his teeth, for he looks like a—sneaking rascal. Come, sirrah, without equivocation, or mental reservation, tell me of what opinion you are, and what calling; for by them I shall guess at your morals.

Tai. An't please you, I'm a dissenting journeyman woman's tailor.

Sir John. Then, sirrah, you love lying by your religion, and theft by your trade: and so,

that your punishments may be suitable to your crimes, I'll have you first gagg'd, and then hanged.

Tai. Pray, good worthy gentlemen, don't abuse me: indeed I'm an honest man, and a good workman, though I say it, that should not say it.

Sir John. No words, sirrah, but attend your fate.

L. Rake. Let me see what's in that bundle.

Tai. An't please you, it's my lady's short cloak and wrapping gown.

Sir John. What lady, you reptile, you?

Tai. My Lady Brute, an't please your honour.

Sir John. My Lady Brute! my wife! the robe of my wife!—with reverence let me approach it. The dear angel is always taking care of me in danger, and has sent me this suit of armour to protect me in this day of battle;—on they go.

All. O brave knight!

L. Rake. Live, Don Quixote the second.

Sir John. Sancho, my 'squire, help me on with my armour.

Tai. O, dear gentlemen! I shall be quite undone if you take the sack.

Sir John. Retire, sirrah! and since you carry off your skin, go home, and be happy ——So! how do you like my shapes now?

L. Rake. To a miracle! he looks like a queen of the Amazons—But to your arms, gentlemen! the enemy's upon their march—here's the watch.

Sir John. Oons! if it were Alexander the Great, at the head of his army, I would drive him into a horsepond.

All. Huzza! O brave knight!

Enter Watchman.

Sir John. See! here he comes, with all his Greeks about him—follow me, boys.

Watch. Hey-day!—who have we got here?—stand.

Sir John. May-hap not.

Watch. What are you all doing here in the streets at this time o'night? And who are you, madam, that seems to be at the head of this noble crew?

Sir John. Sirrah! I am Bonduca, queen of the Welchmen; and with a leek as long as my pedigree, I will destroy your Roman legions in an instant.——Britons, strike home.

[*Snatches a watchman's staff, strikes at the Watch, and falls down, his party drove off.*

Watch. So! we have got the queen, however! we'll make her pay well for her ransom.—Come, madam, will you please to walk before the constable?

Sir John. The constable's a rascal, and you are a son of a whore!

Watch. A most noble reply, truly! If this be her royal style, I'll warrant her maids of honour prattle prettily: but we'll teach you some of our court dialect before we part with you, princess.—Away with her to the round-house.

Sir John. Hands off, you ruffians! My honour's dearer to me than my life; I hope you won't be uncivil.

Watch. Away with her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Bed Chamber.*

Enter HEARTFREE *solus.*

Heart. What the plague ails me?—Love! No, I thank you for that, my heart's rock still—Yet 'tis Belinda that disturbs me, that's positive—Well, what of all that? Must I love her for being troublesome? At that rate I might love all the women I meet, 'egad. But hold!—though I don't love her for disturbing me, yet she may disturb me, because I love her.——Ay, that may be, faith. I have dreamt of her, that's certain——Well, so I have of my mother; therefore what's that to the purpose? Ay, but Belinda runs in my mind waking—and so does many a damn'd thing, that I don't care a farthing for—Methinks though, I would fain be talking to her, and yet I have no business—Well, am I the first man that has had a mind to do an impertinent thing?

Enter CONSTANT.

Con. How now, Heartfree? What makes you up and dress'd so soon? I thought none but lovers quarrelled with their beds; I expected to have found you snoring, as I used to do.

Heart. Why, faith, friend, 'tis the care I have of your affairs, that makes me so thoughtful; I have been studying all night how to bring your matter about with Belinda.

Con. With Belinda?

Heart. With my lady, I mean: and faith I have mighty hopes on't. Sure you must be very well satisfied with her behaviour to you yesterday.

Con. So well, that nothing but a lover's fears can make me doubt of success. But what can this sudden change proceed from?

Heart. Why, you saw her husband beat her, did you not?

Con. That's true; a husband is scarce to be borne upon any terms, much less when he fights with his wife. Methinks she should e'en have cuckolded him upon the spot, to shew, that, after the battle, she was master of the field.

Heart. A council of war of women would infallibly have advised her to it. But, I confess, so agreeable a woman as Belinda deserves better usage.

Con. Belinda again!

Heart. My lady, I mean. What a pox makes me blunder so to-day? [*Aside.*] A plague of this treacherous tongue.

Con. Pr'ythee, look upon me seriously, Heartfree. Now answer me directly; is it my lady or Belinda employs your careful thoughts thus?

Heart. My lady, or Belinda!

Con. In love, by this light; in love.

Heart. In love!

Con. Nay, ne'er deny it; for thou'lt do it so awkwardly, 'twill but make the jest sit heavier about thee. My dear friend, I give you much joy.

Heart. Why pr'ythee, you won't persuade me to it, will you?

Con. That she's mistress of your tongue, that's plain; and I know you are so honest a fellow, your tongue and heart always go together. But how—but how the devil! Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha—

Heart. Hey-day! why sure you don't believe it in earnest.

Con. Yes, I do, because I see you deny it in jest.

Heart. Nay, but look you, Ned—a—deny in jest—a—gadzooks, you know I say—a—when a man denies a thing in jest—a—

Con. Pha, ha, ha, ha, ha—

Heart. Nay, then we shall have it: what, because a man stumbles at a word——Did you never make a blunder?

Con. Yes, for I am in love, I own it.

Heart. Then so am I. Now laugh till thy soul's glutted with mirth. [*Embracing him.*] But, dear Constant, don't tell the town on't.

Con. Nay then, 'twere almost a pity to laugh at thee, after so honest a confession. But tell us a little, Jack, by what new-invented arms has this mighty stroke been given?

Heart. E'en by that unaccountable weapon called Je-ne-scai-quoi; for every thing that can come within the verge of beauty, I have seen it with indifference.

Con. So, in a few words then, the Je-ne-scai-quoi has been too hard for the quilted petticoat.

Heart. I'gad, I think the Je-ne-scai-quoi is in the quilted petticoat; at least 'tis certain I never think on't without—a—a Je-ne-scai-quoi in every part about me.

Con. Well, but have all your remedies lost their virtue? Have you turned her inside out yet?

Heart. I dare not so much as think on't.

Con. But don't the two years fatigue I have had discourage you?

Heart. Yes: I dread what I foresee, yet cannot quit the enterprise: like some soldiers, whose courage dwells more in their honour than their nature, on they go, though the body trembles at what the soul makes it undertake.

Con. Nay, if you expect your mistress will use you, as your profanations against her sex deserve, you tremble justly. But how do you intend to proceed, friend?

Heart. Thou knowest I am but a novice; be friendly, and advise me.

Con. Why, look you then, I'd have you—serenade and a—write a song—go to church—look like a fool—be very officious; ogle, write, and lead out: and who knows, but in a year or two's time, you may be—called a troublesome puppy, and sent about your business.

Heart. That's hard.

Con. Yet thus it falls out with lovers, sir.

Heart. Pox on me for making one of the number.

Con. Have a care! Say no saucy things; 'twill but augment your crime; and, if your mistress hears on't, increase your punishment.

Heart. Pr'ythee say something then to encourage me; you know I helped you in your distress.

Con. Why then, to encourage you to perseverance, that you may be thoroughly ill used for your offences, I'll put you in mind, that even the coyest ladies of 'em all are made up of desires as well as we; and though they do hold out a long time, they will capitulate at last; for that thundering engineer, nature, does make such havock in the town, they must surrender at long run, or perish in their own flames.

Enter Footman.

Foot. Sir, there's a porter without with a letter; he desires to give it into your own hands.

Con. Call him in.

Enter Porter.

What, Joe! is it thee?

Port. An't please you, sir, I was ordered to deliver this into your hands, by two well-shaped ladies, at the New Exchange. I was at your honour's lodgings, and your servants sent me hither.

Con. 'Tis well; are you to carry any answer?

Port. No, my noble master. They gave me my orders, and whip they are gone, like a maidenhead at fifteen.

Con. Very well; there. [*Gives him money.*

Port. God bless your honour. [*Exit.*

Con. Now let's see what honest trusty Joe has brought us. [*Reads.*

"If you and your play-fellow can spare time from your business and devotions, don't fail to be at Spring-Garden about eight in the evening. You'll find nothing there but women, so you need bring no other arms than what you usually carry about you." So, play-fellow, here's something to stay your stomach till your mistress's dish is ready for you.

Heart. Some of our old battered acquaintance. I won't go, not I.

Con. Nay, that you cann't avoid, there's honour in the case; 'tis a challenge, and I want a second.

Heart. I doubt I shall be but a very useless one to you, for I'm so disheartened by this wound Belinda has given me, I do not think I shall have courage enough to draw my sword.

Con. O, if that be all, come along; I'll warrant you'll find sword enough for such enemies as we have to deal withal. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Street.*

Enter Constable and Watchmen with Sir JOHN.

Con. Come, forsooth, come along if you please! I once in compassion thought to have seen you safe home this morning; but you have been so rampant and abusive all night, I shall see what the justice of peace will say to you.

Sir John. And you shall see what I'll say to the justice of peace, sirrah.

[*Watchman knocks at the door.*

Enter Servant.

Con. Is Mr Justice at home?

Serv. Yes.

Con. Pray acquaint his worship we have got an unruly woman here, and desire to know what he'll please to have done with her.

Serv. I'll acquaint my master. [*Exit.*

Sir John. Hark you, constable, what cuckoldy justice is this?

Con. One that knows how to deal with such romps as you are, I'll warrant you.

Enter Justice.

Just. Well, Mr Constable, what is the matter there?

Con. An't please your worship, this here comical sort of a gentlewoman has committed great outrages to-night. She has been frolicking with my Lord Rake and his gang; they attacked the watch, and I hear there has been a man killed. I believe 'tis they have done it.

Sir John. Sir, there may have been murder for aught I know; and 'tis a great mercy there has not been a rape too—that fellow would have ravished me.

1 *Watch.* Ravish! ravish! O lud! O lud! O lud! ravish her! Why, please your worship, I heard Mr Constable say he believed her little better than a maphrodite.

Just. Why, truly, she does seem a little masculine about the mouth.

2 *Watch.* Yes, and about the hands too, an't please your worship. I did but offer, in mere civility, to help her up the steps into our apartment, and with her gripen fists thus——

[*Sir* JOHN *knocks him down.*

Sir John. Ay, just so, sir, I felled him to the ground, like an ox.

Just. Out upon this boisterous woman! out upon her!

Sir John. Mr Justice, he would have been uncivil; it was in defence of my honour, and I demand satisfaction.

2 *Watch.* I hope your worship will satisfy her honour in Bridewell; that fist of her's will make an admirable hemp-beater.

Sir John. Sir, I hope you will protect me against that libidinous rascal. I am a woman of quality and virtue too, for all I am in an undress this morning.

Just. Why, she really has the air of a sort of a woman, a little somethingish out of the common. Madam, if you expect I should be favourable to you, I desire I may know who you are.

Sir John. Sir, I am any body, at your service.

Just. Lady, I desire to know your name.

Sir John. Sir, my name's Mary.

Just. Ay, but your surname, madam.

Sir John. Sir, my surname's the very same with my husband's.

Just. A strange woman this! Who is your husband, pray?

Sir John. Sir John——

Just. Sir John who?

Sir John. Sir John Brute.

Just. Is it possible, madam, you can be my Lady Brute?

Sir John. That happy woman, sir, am I; only a little in my merriment to-night.

Just. I am concerned for Sir John.

Sir John. Truly, so am I.

Just. I have heard he's an honest gentleman.

Sir John. As ever drank.

Just. Good lack! indeed, lady, I'm sorry he has such a wife.

Sir John. I'm sorry he has any wife at all.

Just. And so perhaps may he—I doubt you have not given him a very good taste of matrimony.

Sir John. Taste, sir! Sir, I have scorned to stint him to a taste, I have given him a full meal of it.

Just. Indeed, I believe so. But pray, fair lady, may he have given you any occasion for this extraordinary conduct—does he not use you well?

Sir John. A little upon the rough sometimes.

Just. Ay, any man may be out of humour now and then.

Sir John. Sir, I love peace and quiet, and when a woman don't find that at home, she's apt sometimes to comfort herself with a few innocent diversions abroad.

Just. I doubt he uses you but too well. Pray how does he as to that weighty thing, money? Does he allow you what is proper of that?

Sir John, Sir, I have generally enough to pay the reckoning, if this son of a whore of a drawer would but bring his bill.

Just. A strange woman this—Does he spend a reasonable portion of his time at home, to the comfort of his wife and children?

Sir John. He never gave his wife cause to repine at his being abroad in his life.

Just. Pray, madam, how may he be in the grand matrimonial point?—Is he true to your bed?

Sir John. Chaste! Oons! this fellow asks so many impertinent questions! E'gad, I believe it is the justice's wife in the justice's clothes!

Just. 'Tis a great pity he should have been thus disposed of. Pray, madam, (and then I have done) what may be your ladyship's common method of life, if I may presume so far?

Sir John. Why, sir, much that of a woman of quality.

Just. Pray, how may you generally pass your time, madam? Your morning, for example?

Sir John. Sir, like a woman of quality—I wake about two o'clock in the afternoon—I stretch and make a sign for my chocolate—When I have drank three cups, I slide down again upon my back, with my arms over my head, while my two maids put on my stockings.—Then, hanging upon their shoulders, I am trailed to my great chair, where I sit and yawn for my breakfast—If it don't come presently, I lie down upon my couch to say my prayers, while my maid reads me the play-bills.

Just. Very well, madam.

Sir John. When the tea is brought in, I drink twelve regular dishes, with eight slices of bread and butter; and half an hour after, I send to the cook, to know if the dinner is almost ready.

Just. So, madam!

Sir John. By that time my head is half dressed, I hear my husband swearing himself into a state of perdition, that the meat's all cold upon the table; to amend which, I come down in an hour more, and have it sent back to the kitchen, to be all drest over again.

Just. Poor man!

Sir John. When I have dined, and my idle servants are presumptuously set down at their ease to do so too, I call for my coach, to go visit fifty dear friends, of whom I hope I never shall find one at home while I shall live.

Just. So! there's the morning and afternoon pretty well disposed of——Pray, how, madam, do you pass your evenings?

Sir John. Like a woman of spirit, sir; a great spirit. Give me a box and dice—Seven's the main, oons! Sir, I set you a hundred pound! Why, do you think women are married now a-days to sit at home and mend napkins? Oh, the Lord help your head!

Just. Mercy upon us, Mr Constable! what will this age come to?

Con. What will it come to, indeed, if such women as these are not set in the stocks?

Sir John. Sir, I have a little urgent business calls upon me, and therefore I desire the favour of you to bring matters to a conclusion.

Just. Madam, if I were sure that business were not to commit more disorders, I would release you.

Sir John. None——by my virtue.

Just. Then, Mr Constable, you may discharge her.

Sir John. Sir, your very humble servant. If you please to accept of a bottle——

Just. I thank you kindly, madam; but I never drink in a morning. Good-by t'ye, madam, good-by t'ye.

Sir John. Good-by t'ye, good sir. [*Exit Justice.*] So, now, Mr Constable, shall you and I go pick up a whore together?

Con. No, thank you, madam; my wife's enough to satisfy any reasonable man.

Sir John. [*Aside.*] He, he, he, he, he—the fool is married then. Well, you won't go?

Con. Not I, truly.

Sir John. Then I'll go by myself; and you and your wife may go to the devil. [*Exit.*

Con. [*Gazing after her.*] Why, God-a-mercy, lady! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Spring-Garden.*

CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *cross the Stage. As they go off, enter Lady* FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *masked, and dogging them.*

Con. So; I think we are about the time appointed; let us walk up this way. [*Exeunt.*

L. Fan. Good: thus far I have dogged 'em without being discovered. 'Tis infallibly some intrigue that brings them to Spring-Garden. How my poor heart is torn and wrecked with fear and jealousy! Yet let it be any thing but that flirt Belinda, and I'll try to bear it; but if it proves her, all that's woman in me shall be employed to destroy her.

[*Exit after* CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Re-enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE. *Lady* FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *still following at a distance*

Con. I see no females yet, that have any thing to say to us. I'm afraid we are bantered

Heart. I wish we were, for I'm in no humour to make either them or myself merry.

Con. Nay, I'm sure you'll make them merry enough, if I tell 'em why you are dull. But pr'ythee, why so heavy and sad before you begin to be ill-used?

Heart. For the same reason, perhaps, that you are so brisk and well pleased; because both pains and pleasures are generally more considerable in prospect, than when they come to pass.

Enter Lady BRUTE *and* BELINDA, *masked, and poorly dressed.*

Con. How now? who are these? Not our same, I hope.

Heart. If they are, we are e'en well enough served, to come a-hunting here, when we had so much better game in chase elsewhere.

L. Fan. [*To* MADEMOISELLE.] So, those are their ladies without doubt. But I'm afraid that doiley stuff is not worn for want of better clothes. They are the very shape and size of Belinda and her aunt.

Madem. So dey be inteed, matam.

L. Fan. We'll slip into this close arbour, where we may hear all they say.

[*Exeunt Lady* FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

L. Brute. What, are you afraid of us, gentlemen?

Heart. Why, truly, I think we may, if appearances don't lie.

Bel. Do you always find women what they appear to be, sir?

Heart. No, forsooth; but I seldom find 'em better than they appear to be.

Bel. Then the outside's best, you think?

Heart. 'Tis the honestest.

Con. Have a care, Heartfree; you are relapsing again.

L. Brute. Why, does the gentleman use to rail at women?

Con. He has done formerly.

Bel. I suppose he had very good call for't. They did not use you so well as you thought you deserved, sir?

L. Brute. They made themselves merry at your expence, sir?

Bel. Laugh'd when you sigh'd?

L. Brute. Slept while you were waking?

Bel. Had your porter beat?

L. Brute. And threw your billet-doux in the fire?

Heart. Hey-day, I shall do more than rail presently.

Bel. Why, you won't beat us, will you?

Heart. I don't know but I may.

Con. What the devil's coming here? Sir John —and drunk, i'faith.

Enter Sir JOHN.

Sir John. What a pox——here's Constant, Heartfree—and two whores, 'egad—O, you covetous rogues!—What, have you ne'er a spare punk for your friend? But I'll share with you.

Heart. Why, what the plague have you been doing, knight? [*He seizes both the women.*

Sir John. Why, I have been beating the watch, and scandalizing the women of quality.

Heart. A very good account, truly.

Sir John. And what do you think I'll do next?

Con. Nay, that no man can guess.

Sir John. Why, if you'll let me sup with you, I'll treat both your strumpets.

L. Brute. [*Aside.*] O Lord! we are undone.

Heart. No, we can't sup together, because we have some affairs elsewhere. But if you'll accept of these two ladies, we'll be so complaisant to you, to resign our right in 'em.

Bel. [*Aside.*] Lord, what shall we do?

Sir John. Let me see: their clothes are such damn'd clothes, they won't pawn for the reckoning.

Heart. Sir John, your servant. Raptures attend you.

Con. Adieu, ladies; make much of the gentleman.

L. Brute. Why, sure you won't leave us in the hands of a drunken fellow, to abuse us.

Sir John. Who do you call a drunken fellow, you slut you? I am a man of quality; the king has made me a knight.

Heart. Ay, ay, you are in good hands; adieu, adieu. [*Runs off.*

L. Brute. The devil's hands! Let me go, or I'll—For Heaven's sake, protect us.

[*She breaks from him, runs to* CONSTANT, *twitching off her mask, and clapping it on again.*

Sir John. I'll devil you, you jade you. I'll demolish your ugly face.

Re-enter HEARTFREE. BELINDA *runs to him, and shews her face.*

Heart. Hold, thou mighty man! Look ye, sir, we did but jest with you. These are ladies of our acquaintance, that we had a mind to frighten a little, but now you must leave us.

Sir John. Oons, I won't leave you, not I.

Heart. Nay, but you must though; and therefore make no words on't.

Sir John. Then you are a couple of damned uncivil fellows—And I hope your punks will give you sauce to your mutton. [*Exit.*

L. Brute. Oh, I shall never come to myself again, I'm so frightened!

Con. 'Tis a narrow escape, indeed.

Bel. Women must have frolics, you see, whatever they cost 'em.

Heart. This might have proved a dear one though.

L. Brute. You are the more obliged to us for the risk we run upon your accounts.

Con. And I hope you'll acknowledge something due to our knight-errantry, ladies. This is the second time we have delivered you.

L. Brute. 'Tis true; and since we see fate has design'd you for our guardians, 'twill make us the more willing to trust ourselves in your hands. But you must not have the worse opinion of us for our innocent frolic.

Heart. Ladies, you may command our opinions in every thing that is to your advantage.

Bel. Then, sir, I command you to be of opinion that women are sometimes better than they appear to be.

[*L.* BRUTE *and* CONSTANT *talk apart.*

Heart. Madam, you have made a convert of me in every thing. I'm grown a fool. I could be fond of a woman.

Bel. I thank you, sir, in the name of the whole sex.

Heart. Which sex nothing but yourself could ever have atoned for.

Bel. Now has my vanity a devilish itch to know in what my merit consists.

Heart. In your humility, madam, that keeps you ignorant it consists at all.

Bel. One other compliment, with that serious face, and I hate you for ever after.

Heart. Some women love to be abused: is that it you would be at?

Bel. No, not that neither: but I'd have men talk plainly what's fit for women to hear, without putting 'em to a real or an affected blush.

Heart. Why then, in as plain terms as I can find to express myself, I could love you even to matrimony itself almost, 'egad.

Bel. Just as Sir John did her ladyship there —What think you? Don't you believe one month's time might bring you down to the same indifference, only clad in a little better manners, perhaps? Well, you men are unaccountable things, mad till you have your mistresses, and then stark mad till you are rid of 'em again. Tell me honestly, is not your patience put to a much severer trial after possession than before?

Heart. With a great many, I must confess, it is, to our eternal scandal; but I—dear creature, do but try me.

Bel. That's the surest way indeed to know, but not the safest. [*To Lady* BRUTE.] Madam, are you not for taking a turn in the great walk? It's almost dark; nobody will know us.

L. Brute. Really I find myself something idle, Belinda: besides, I doat upon this little odd private corner. But don't let my lazy fancy confine you.

Con. [*Aside.*] So, she would be left alone with me; that's well.

Bel. Well, we'll take one turn, and come to you again. [*To* HEARTFREE.] Come, sir, shall we go pry into the secrets of the garden? Who knows what discoveries we may make.

Heart. Madam, I am at your service.

Con. [*To* HEARTFREE, *aside.*] Don't make too

much haste back; for, d'ye hear——I may be busy.

Heart. Enough.

[*Exeunt* BELINDA *and* HEARTFREE.

L. Brute. Sure you think me scandalously free, Mr Constant: I'm afraid I shall lose your good opinion of me.

Con. My good opinion, madam, is like your cruelty, never to be removed.

L. Brute. Indeed I doubt you much. Why, suppose you had a wife, and she should entertain a gallant?

Con. If I gave her just cause, how should I justly condemn her?

L. Brute. Ah; but you differ widely about just causes.

Con. But blows can bear no dispute.

L. Brute. Nor ill manners much, truly.

Con. Then no woman upon earth has so just a cause as you have.

L. Brute. But can a husband's faults release my duty?

Con. In equity, without doubt. And where laws dispense with equity, equity should dispense with laws.

L. Brute. Pray let us leave this dispute; for you men have as much witchcraft in your arguments, as women have in their eyes.

Con. But whilst you attack me with your charms, 'tis but reasonable I assault you with mine.

L. Brute. The case is not the same. What mischief we do we can't help, and therefore are to be forgiven.

Con. Beauty soon obtains pardon for the pain that it gives, when it applies the balm of compassion to the wound; but a fine face and a hard heart is almost as bad as an ugly face and a soft one; both very troublesome to many a poor gentleman.

L. Brute. Yes, and to many a poor gentlewoman too, I can assure you. But pray, which of 'em is it that most afflicts you?

Con. Your glass and conscience will inform you, madam. But for Heaven's sake, (for now I must be serious,) if pity or if gratitude can move you, [*Taking her hand*;] if constancy and truth have power to tempt you; if love, if adoration can affect you, give me at least some hopes that time may do, what you perhaps mean never to perform; 'twill ease my sufferings, though not quench my flame.

L. Brute. Your sufferings eased, your flame would soon abate; and that I would preserve, not quench it, sir.

Con. Would you preserve it, nourish it with favours; for that's the food it naturally requires.

L. Brute. Yet on that natural food 'twould surfeit soon, should I resolve to grant all you would ask.

Con. And in refusing all, you starve it. Forgive me, therefore, since my hunger rages, if I at last grow wild, and in my frenzy force at least this from you. [*Kissing her hand.*] Or if you'd have my flame soar higher still, then grant me this, and this, and thousands more. [*Kissing first her hand, and then her neck.*] [*Aside.*] For now's the time she melts into compassion.

L. Brute. O Heavens! Let me go.

Con. Ay, go, ay: where shall we go, my charming angel—into this private arbour——Nay, let's lose no time——moments are precious——

L. Brute. And lovers wild. Pray let us stop here; at least for this time.

Con. 'Tis impossible; he that has power over you, can have none over himself.

[*As he is forcing her into the arbour, Lady* FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE *bolt out upon them, and run over the stage.*

L. Brute. Ah! I'm lost.

L. Fan. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe!

Madem. Fe, fe, fe, fe, fe!

Con. Death and furies, who are these?

L. Brute. O Heavens! I'm out of my wits: if they know me, I am ruined.

Con. Don't be frightened: ten thousand to one they are strangers to you.

L. Brute. Whatever they are, I won't stay here a moment longer.

Con. Whither will you go?

L. Brute. Home, as if the devil were in me. Lord, where's this Belinda now?

Enter BELINDA *and* HEARTFREE.

O! 'tis well you are come; I'm so frightened, my hair stands an end. Let's be gone, for Heaven's sake.

Bel. Lord, what's the matter?

L. Brute. The devil's the matter; here's a couple of women have done the most impertinent things. Away, away, away, away, away.

[*Exeunt running.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Lady* FANCYFUL'S *House.*

Enter Lady FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

L. Fan. Well, Mademoiselle, did you dodge the filthy things?

Madem. O que ouy, madame.

L. Fan. And where are they?

Madem. Au logis.

L. Fan. What, men and all?

Madem. Tous ensemble.

L. Fan. O confidence! What, carry their fellows to their own house!

Madem. C'est que le mari n'y est pas.

L. Fan. No, so I believe, truly. But he shall be there, and quickly too, if I can find him out.

Well, 'tis a prodigious thing to see, when men and women get together, how they fortify one another in their impudence. But if that drunken fool, her husband, be to be found in e'er a tavern in town, I'll send him amongst 'em; I'll spoil their sport.

Madem. En vérité, madame, ce seroit domage.

L. Fan. 'Tis in vain to oppose it, Mademoiselle, therefore never go about it. For I am the steadiest creature in the world—when I am determined to do mischief. So, come along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Sir* JOHN BRUTE'S *House.*

Enter CONSTANT, HEARTFREE, *Lady* BRUTE, BELINDA, *and* LOVEWELL.

L. Brute. But are you sure you don't mistake, Lovewell?

Love. Madam, I saw 'em all go into the tavern together, and my master so drunk he could scarce stand. [*Exit.*

L. Brute. Then, gentlemen, I believe we may venture to let you stay, and play at cards with us an hour or two; for they'll scarce part till morning.

Bel. I think 'tis pity they should ever part—

Con. The company that's here, madam.

L. Brute. Then, sir, the company that's here must remember to part itself in time.

Con. Madam, we don't intend to forfeit your future favours, by an indiscreet usage of this. The moment you give us the signal, we sha'n't fail to make our retreat.

L. Brute. Upon those conditions then let us sit down to cards.

Enter LOVEWELL.

Love. O Lord, madam! here's my master just staggering in upon you; he has been quarrelsome yonder, and they have kicked him out of the company.

L. Brute. Into the closet, gentlemen, for Heaven's sake; I'll wheedle him to bed, if possible. [CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE *run into the closet.*

Enter Sir JOHN, *all dirt and bloody.*

L. Brute. Ah——Ah——he's all over blood.

Sir John. What the plague does the woman squall for? Did you never see a man in pickle before?

L. Brute. Lord, where have you been?

Sir John. I have been at—cuffs.

L. Brute. I fear that is not all. I hope you are not wounded.

Sir John. Sound as a roach, wife.

L. Brute. I'm mighty glad to hear it.

Sir John. You know—I think you lie.

L. Brute. You do me wrong to think so—for Heaven's my witness, I had rather see my own blood trickle down, than yours.

Sir John. Then will I be sacrificed.

L. Brute. 'Tis a hard fate I should not be believed.

Sir John. 'Tis a damned atheistical age, wife.

L. Brute. I am sure I have given you a thousand tender proofs how great my care is of you. But, spite of all your cruel thoughts, I still persist; and at this moment, if I can, persuade you to lie down and sleep a little.

Sir John. Why—do you think I am drunk, you slut you?

L. Brute. Heaven forbid I should: But I'm afraid you are feverish. Pray let me feel your pulse.

Sir John. Stand off, and be damned.

L. Brute. Why, I see your distemper in your eyes. You are all on fire. Pray go to bed; let me entreat you.

Sir John. Come—Kiss me, then.

L. Brute. [*Kissing him.*] There: now go. [*Aside.*] He stinks like poison.

Sir John. I see it goes damnably against your stomach—and therefore—kiss me again.

L. Brute. Nay, now you fool me.

Sir John. Do't, I say.

L. Brute. [*Aside.*] Ah, Lord have mercy upon me. Well: there:—Now will you go?

Sir John. Now, wife, you shall see my gratitude. You gave me two kisses—I'll give you—two hundred. [*Kisses and tumbles her.*

L. Brute. O Lord! pray, Sir John, be quiet. Heavens! what a pickle am I in.

Bel. [*Aside.*] If I were in her pickle, I'd call my gallant out of the closet, and he should cudgel him soundly.

Sir John. So, now you being as dirty and as nasty as myself, we may go pig together. But first I must have a cup of your cold tea, wife. [*Going to the closet.*

L. Brute. O, I'm ruined!——There's none there, my dear.

Sir John. I'll warrant you I'll find some, my dear.

L. Brute. You cann't open the door; the lock's spoiled; I have been turning and turning the key this half hour to no purpose. I'll send for the smith to-morrow.

Sir John. There's ne'er a smith in Europe can open a door with more expedition than I can do.—As, for example—pou. [*He bursts open the door with his foot.*]—How now! what the devil have we got here?—Constant—Heartfree—and two whores again, 'egad. This is the worst cold tea——that ever I met with in my life.

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

L. Brute. [*Aside.*] O Lord, what will become of us!

Sir John. Gentlemen—I am your very humble servant—I give you many thanks—I see you take care of my family—I shall do all I can to return the obligation.

Con. Sir, how oddly soever this business may appear to you, you'd have no cause to be uneasy if you knew the truth of all things. Your lady is the most virtuous woman in the world, and nothing has past but an innocent frolic.

Heart. Nothing else, upon my honour, sir.

Sir John. You are both very civil gentlemen—and my wife, there, is a very civil gentlewoman;

therefore I don't doubt but many civil things have pass'd between you.—Your very humble servant.

L. Brute. [*Aside to* CON.] Pray be gone; he's so drunk he cann't hurt us to-night, and to-morrow morning you shall hear from us

Con. I'll obey you, madam.——Sir, when you are cool, you'll understand reason better—so then I shall take the pains to inform you. If not, I wear a sword, sir, and so good bye t'ye. Come along, Heartfree. [*Exeunt.*

Sir John. Wear a sword, sir!—And what of all that sir? He comes to my house; eats my meat; lies with my wife; dishonours my family; gets a bastard to inherit my estate—And when I ask a civil account of all this—Sir, says he, I wear a sword.—Wear a sword, sir!—Yes, sir, says he, I wear a sword.—It may be a good answer at cross purposes, but 'tis a damned one to a man in my whimsical circumstances.—Sir, says he, I wear a sword.—[*To Lady* BRUTE.] And what do you wear now? Ha! tell me. [*Sitting down in a great chair.*]—What, you are modest, and cann't—Why then, I'll tell you, you slut you. You wear —an impudent lewd face—a damned designing heart—and a tail—and a tail full of———

[*He falls fast asleep, snoring.*

L. Brute. So, thanks to kind Heaven, he's fast for some hours.

Bel. 'Tis well he is so, that we may have time to lay our story handsomely; for we must lie like the devil to bring ourselves off.

L. Brute. What shall we say, Belinda?

Bel. [*Musing.*]—I'll tell you: it must all light upon Heartfree and I. We'll say he has courted me some time, but, for reasons unknown to us, has ever been very earnest the thing might be kept from Sir John. That therefore hearing him upon the stairs, he run into the closet, though against our will, and Constant with him, to prevent jealousy. And to give this a good impudent face of truth, (that I may deliver you from the trouble you are in,) I'll e'en, if he pleases, marry him.

L. Brute. I'm beholden to you, cousin; but that would be carrying the jest a little too far, for your own sake: you know he's a younger brother, and has nothing.

Bel. 'Tis true; but I like him, and have fortune enough to keep above extremity: I cann't say I would live with him in a cell, upon love and bread and butter; but I'd rather have the man I love, and a middle state of life, than that gentleman in the chair there, and twice your ladyship's splendour.

L. Brute. In truth, niece, you are in the right on't: but 'tis late: let's end our discourse for to-night, and, out of an excess of charity, take a small care of that nasty drunken thing there—Do but look at him, Belinda.

Bel. Ah——'tis a savoury dish.

L. Brute. As savoury as 'tis, I'm cloyed with it. Pr'ythee call the butler to take away.

Bel. Call the butler!—call the scavenger. [*To a Servant within.*] Who's there?—Call Rasor: let him take away his master, scour him clean with a little soap and sand, and so put him to-bed.

L. Brute. Come, Belinda, I'll e'en lie with you to-night, and in the morning we'll send for our gentlemen, to set this matter even.

Bel. With all my heart.

L. Brute. Good night, my dear.

[*Making a low curtsey to Sir* JOHN.

Both. Ha, ha, ha! [*Exeunt.*

Enter RASOR.

Rasor. My lady there's a wag—my master there's a cuckold. Marriage is a slippery thing—Women have depraved appetites—My lady's a wag—I have heard all; I have seen all; I understand all; and I'll tell all—for my little Frenchwoman loves news dearly. This story will gain her heart, or nothing will. [*To his Master.*] Come, sir, your head's too full of fumes at present, to make room for your jealousy; but I reckon we shall have rare work with you when your pate's empty. Come to your kennel, you cuckoldy, drunken sot you. [*Carries him on his back.*

My master's asleep in his chair, and a-snoring,
My lady's abroad, and—Oh rare matrimony!

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Lady* FANCYFUL'S *House.*

Enter Lady FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

L. Fan. But why did not you tell me before, Mademoiselle, that Rasor and you were fond?

Madem. De modesty hinder me, matam.

L. Fan. Why, truly, modesty does often hinder us from doing things we have an extravagant mind to. But does he love you well enough yet, to do any thing you bid him? Do you think, to oblige you, he would speak scandal?

Madem. Matam, to oblige your ladyship, he shall speak any thing.

L. Fan. Why then, Mademoiselle, I'll tell you what you shall do. You shall engage him to tell his master all that passed at Spring Garden. I have a mind he should know what a wife and a niece he has got.

Madem. Il le fera, madame.

Enter a Footman, who speaks to MADEMOISELLE *apart.*

Foot. Mademoiselle, yonder's Mr Rasor desires to speak with you.

Madem. Tell him I come presently. [*Exit Footman.*]—Rasor be dere, matam.

L. Fan. That's fortunate: Well, I'll leave you together; and if you find him stubborn, Mademoiselle—hark you—don't refuse him a few reasonable little liberties, to put him in humour.

Madem. Laissez moi faire. [*Exit L.* FAN.

RASOR *peeps in, and seeing Lady* FANCYFUL *gone, turns to* MADEMOISELLE, *takes her about the neck, and kisses her.*

Madem. How now, confidence!

Rasor. How now, modesty!

Madem. Who make you so familiar, sirrah?

Rasor. My impudence, hussy.

Madem. Stand off, rogue-face.

Rasor. Ah, Mademoiselle—great news at our house.

Madem. Why, vat be de matter?

Rasor. The matter!—why, uptails all's the matter.

Madem. Tu te mocque de moi.

Rasor. Now do you long to know the particulars—the time when—the place where—the manner how: but I won't tell you a word more.

Madem. Nay, den dou kill me, Rasor.

Rasor. Come, kiss me, then.

[*Clapping his hands behind.*

Madem. Nay, pridee tell me.

Rasor. Good bye t'ye. [*Going.*

Madem. Hold, hold—I will kiss dee.

[*Kissing him.*

Rasor. So, that's civil:—Why now, my pretty Poll—my goldfinch—my little water-wagtail, you must know that—Come, kiss me again.

Madem. I won't kiss dee no more.

Rasor. Good bye t'ye. [*Going.*

Madem. Doucement; dere; es tu content?

[*Kissing him.*

Rasor. So: now I'll tell thee all. Why, the news is, that cuckoldom in folio is newly printed, and matrimony in quarto is just going into the press. Will you buy any books, Mademoiselle?

Madem. Tu parle comme un libraire; de devil no understand dee.

Rasor. Why then, that I may make myself intelligible to a waiting-woman, I'll speak like a valet de chambre.—My lady has cuckolded my master.

Madem. Bon.

Rasor. Which we take very ill from her hands, I can tell her that. We cann't yet prove matter of fact upon her.

Madem. N'importe.

Rasor. But we can prove that matter of fact had like to have been upon her.

Madem. Ouy-da!

Rasor. For we have such terrible circumstances——

Madem. Sans doute.

Rasor. That any man of parts may draw tickling conclusions from 'em.

Madem. Fort bien.

Rasor. We found a couple of tight, well-built gentlemen stuffed into her ladyship's closet.

Madem. Le diable!

Rasor. And I, in my particular person, have discovered a most damnable plot, how to persuade my poor master that all this hide and seek, this Will in the Wisp, has no other meaning than a Christian marriage for sweet Mrs Belinda.

Madem. Une marriage? Ah, les droles.

Rasor. Don't you interrupt me, hussy. 'Tis agreed, I say; and my innocent lady, to wriggle herself out at the back-door of the business, turns marriage-bawd to her niece, and resolves to deliver up her fair body, to be tumbled and mumbled by that young liquorish whipster, Heartfree. Now, are you satisfied?

Madem. No.

Rasor. Right woman—always gaping for more.

Madem. Dis be all, den, dat you know?

Rasor. All!—Ay, and a great deal too, I think.

Madem. Dou be fool; dou know nothing.—— Ecoute, mon pauvre Rasor.—Dou sees des two eyes? Des two eyes have see de devil.

Rasor. The woman's mad.

Madem. In Spring Garden, dat rogue Constant meet dy lady.

Rasor. Bon.

Madem. I'll tell dee no more.

Rasor. Nay, pr'ythee, my swan.

Madem. Come, kiss me, den.

[*Clapping her hands behind her, as he did before.*

Rasor. I won't kiss you, not I.

Madem. Adieu. [*Going.*

Rasor. Hold—Now proceed.

[*Gives her a hearty kiss.*

Madem. A çà—I hide myself in one cunning place, where I hear all, and see all. First dy drunken master come mal à propos; but de sot no know his own dear wife, so he leave her to her sport.—Den de game begin. De lover say soft ting; de lady look upon de ground. [*As she speaks,* RASOR *still acts the man, and she the woman.*] He take her by de hand: she turn her head on oder way. Den he squeeze very hard: den she pull—very softly. Den he take her in his arms: den she give him littel pat. Den he kiss her tettons: den she say—pish, nay, fie. Den he tremble: den she sigh. Den he pull her into de arbour: den she pinch him.

Rasor. Ay, but not so hard, you baggage you.

Madem. Den he grow bold: she grow weake: he tro her down, il tombe dessu, le diable assist, il emport tout.—[RASOR *struggles with her, as if he would throw her down.*]—Stand off, sirrah.

Rasor. You have set me a-fire, you jade you.

Madem. Den go to de river and quench dyself.

Rasor. What an unnatural harlot this!

Madem. Rasor.

[*Looking languishingly on him.*

Rasor. Mademoiselle.

Madem. Dou no love me?

Rasor. Not love thee!—More than a Frenchman does soup.

Madem. Den you will refuse nothing dat I bid dee?

Rasor. Don't bid me hang myself then.

Madem. No, only tell dy master all I have tell dee of dy laty.

Rasor. Why, you little malicious strumpet you—should you like to be served so?

Madem. Dou dispute den?—Adieu.

Rasor. Hold—But why wilt thou make me be such a rogue, my dear?

Madem. Voilà un vrai Anglois! Il est amoureux, et cependant il veut raisonner. Va t'en au diable.

Rasor. Hold, once more.—In hopes thou'lt

give me up thy body, I'll make a present of my honesty.

Madem. Bon, écoute donc; if dou fail me—I never see dee more. If dou obey me—Je m'abandonne à toy, à toy. [*She takes him about the neck, and gives him a smacking kiss.*

[*Exit* MADEMOISELLE.

Rasor. [*Licking his lips.*] Not be a rogue! —*Amor vincit omnia.* [*Exit* RASOR.

Enter Lady FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

L. Fan. Marry, say ye? Will the two things marry?

Madem. On le va faire, madame.

L. Fan. Look you, Mademoiselle—in short, I cann't bear it—no, I find I cann't. If once I see 'em a-bed together, I shall have ten thousand thoughts in my head, will make me run distracted. Therefore, run and call Rasor back immediately, for something must be done to stop this impertinent wedding. If I can but defer it four-and-twenty hours, I'll make such work about town, with that little pert slut's reputation, he shall as soon marry a witch.

Madem. [*Aside.*] La voilà bien intentionée.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—CONSTANT'S *Lodgings.*

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Con. But what dost think will become of this business?

Heart. 'Tis easier to think what will not become on't.

Con. What's that?

Heart. A challenge. I know the knight too well for that; his dear body will always prevail upon his noble soul to be quiet.

Con. But though he dare not challenge me, perhaps he may venture to challenge his wife.

Heart. Not if you whisper him in the ear, you won't have him do't; and there's no other way left, that I see. For, as drunk as he was, he'll remember you and I were where we should not be; and I don't think him quite blockhead enough yet, to be persuaded we were got into his wife's closet only to peep into her prayer-book.

Enter a Servant with a letter.

Serv. Sir, here's a letter—a porter brought it.

Con. O ho, here's instructions for us. [*Reads.*] "The accident that has happened has touched our invention to the quick. We would fain come off without your help, but find that's impossible. In a word, the whole business must be thrown upon a matrimonial intrigue between your friend and mine. But if the parties are not fond enough to go quite through with the matter, 'tis sufficient for our turn, they own the design. We'll find pretences enough to break the match. Adieu." —Well, women for invention! How long would my blockhead have been producing this! Hey, Heartfree? What, musing, man! Pr'ythee be cheerful. What say'st thou, friend, to this matrimonial remedy?

Heart. Why, I say, it's worse than the disease.

Con. Here's a fellow for you. There's beauty and money on her side, and love up to the ears on his; and yet——

Heart. And yet, I think, I may reasonably be allowed to boggle at marrying the niece, in the very moment that you are deluding the aunt.

Con. Why, truly, there may be something in that. But have not you a good opinion enough of your own parts, to believe you could keep a wife to yourself?

Heart. I should have, if I had a good opinion enough of hers, to believe she could do as much by me. But pr'ythee advise me in this good and evil, this life and death, this blessing and curse, that is set before me. For to do 'em right, after all, the wife seldom rambles, till the husband shews her the way.

Con. 'Tis true, a man of real worth scarce ever is a cuckold, but by his own fault. Women are not naturally lewd; there must be something to urge 'em to it. They'll cuckold a churl out of revenge; a fool, because they despise him; a beast, because they loath him. But when they make bold with a man they once had a well-grounded value for, 'tis because they first see themselves neglected by him.

Heart. Shall I marry, or die a maid?

Con. Why, faith, Heartfree, matrimony is like an army going to engage. Love's the forlorn hope, which is soon cut off; the marriage knot is the main body, which may stand buff a long long time; and repentance is the rear guard, which rarely gives ground, as long as the main body has a being.

Heart. Conclusion then—you advise me to rake on as you do.

Con. That's not concluded yet. For though marriage be a lottery, in which there are wondrous many blanks, yet there is one inestimable lot, in which the only heaven on earth is written. Would your kind fate but guide your hand to that, though I were wrapped in all that luxury itself could clothe me with, I should envy you.

Heart. And justly too; for to be capable of loving one, doubtless, is better than to possess a thousand. But how far that capacity's in me, alas, I know not!

Con. But you would know?

Heart. I would so.

Con. Matrimony will inform you. Come, one flight of resolution carries you to the land of experience, where, in a very moderate time, you'll know the capacity of your soul and your body both, or I'm mistaken. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Sir* JOHN BRUTE'S *House.*

Enter Lady BRUTE *and* BELINDA.

Bel. Well, madam, what answer have you from 'em?

L. Brute. That they'll be here this moment. I fancy 'twill end in a wedding: I'm sure he's a fool if it don't. Ten thousand pounds, and such a lass as you are, is no contemptible offer to a

younger brother. But are not you under strange agitations? Pr'ythee, how does your pulse beat?

Bel. High and low; I have much ado to be valiant. Is it not very strange to go to bed with a man?

L. Brute. Um—it is a little odd at first, but it will soon grow easy to you.

Enter CONSTANT *and* HEARTFREE.

Good morrow, gentlemen: how have you slept after your adventure?

Heart. Some careful thoughts, ladies, on your accounts, have kept us waking.

Bel. And some careful thoughts on your own, I believe, have hindered you from sleeping. Pray, how does this matrimonial project relish with you?

Heart. Why, faith, e'en as storming towns does with soldiers, where the hopes of delicious plunder banishes the fear of being knocked on the head.

Bel. Is it then possible, after all, that you dare think of downright lawful wedlock?

Heart. Madam, you have made me so foolhardy, I dare do any thing.

Bel. Then, sir, I challenge you, and matrimony's the spot where I expect you.

Heart. 'Tis enough; I'll not fail. [*Aside.*] So, now I am in for Hobbes's voyage; a great leap in the dark.

L. Brute. Well, gentlemen, this matter being concluded then, have you got your lessons ready? for Sir John is grown such an atheist of late, he'll believe nothing upon easy terms.

Con. We'll find means to extend his faith, madam. But pray how do you find him this morning?

L. Brute. Most lamentably morose; chewing the cud after last night's discovery, of which, however, he has but a confused notion e'en now. But I'm afraid the valet de chambre has told him all; for they are very busy together at this moment. When I told him of Belinda's marriage, I had no other answer but a grunt; from which you may draw what conclusions you think fit. But to your notes, gentlemen: he's here.

Enter Sir JOHN *and* RASOR.

Con. Good morrow, sir.

Heart. Good morrow, Sir John; I'm very sorry my indiscretion should cause so much disorder in your family.

Sir John. Disorders generally come from indiscretion, sir: 'tis no strange thing at all.

L. Brute. I hope, my dear, you are satisfied there was no wrong intended you.

Sir John. None, my dove.

Bel. If not, I hope my consent to marry Mr Heartfree will convince you. For, as little as I know of amours, sir, I can assure you, one intrigue is enough to bring four people together, without further mischief.

Sir John. And I know too, that intrigues tend to procreation of more kinds than one. One intrigue will beget another, as soon as beget a son or a daughter.

Con. I am very sorry, sir, to see you still seem unsatisfied with a lady, whose more than common virtue, I am sure, were she my wife, should meet a better usage.

Sir John. Sir, if her conduct has put a trick upon her virtue, her virtue's a bubble, but her husband's the loser.

Con. Sir, you have received a sufficient answer already, to justify both her conduct and mine. You'll pardon me for meddling in your family affairs; but I perceive I am the man you are jealous of, and therefore it concerns me.

Sir John. Would it did not concern me, and then I should not care who it concerned.

Con. Well, sir, if truth and reason won't content you, I know but one way more, which, if you think fit, you may take.

Sir John. Lord, sir, you are very hasty: if I had been found at prayers in your wife's closet, I should have allowed you twice as much time to come to yourself in.

Con. Nay, sir, if time be all you want, we have no quarrel.

Heart. I told you how the sword would work upon him. [*Sir* JOHN *muses.*

Con. Let him muse; however, I'll lay fifty pounds our foreman brings us in not guilty.

Sir John. [*Aside.*] 'Tis very well—'tis very well—In spite of that young jade's matrimonial intrigue, I am a downright stinking cuckold—Here they are—Boo—[*Putting his hand to his forehead.*] Methinks I could butt with a bull. What the plague did I marry for? I knew she did not like me; if she had, she would have lain with me; for I would have done so, because I liked her; but that's past, and I have her. And now what shall I do with her?—If I put my horns into my pocket, she'll grow insolent—if I don't, that goat there, that stallion, is ready to whip me through the guts.—The debate then is reduced to this; shall I die a hero, or live a rascal?—Why, wiser men than I have long since concluded, that a living dog is better than a dead lion. [*To* CON. *and* HEART.] Gentlemen, now my wine and my passion are governable, I must own, I have never observed any thing in my wife's course of life, to back me in my jealousy of her; but jealousy's a mark of love; so she need not trouble her head about it, as long as I make no more words on't.

Lady FANCYFUL *enters disguised, and addresses* BELINDA *apart.*

Con. I'm glad to see your reason rule at last. Give me your hand: I hope you'll look upon me as you used to do.

Sir John. Your humble servant. [*Aside.*] A wheedling son of a whore!

Heart. And that I may be sure you are friends with me too, pray give me your consent to wed your niece.

Sir John. Sir, you have it with all my heart;

damn me if you ha'n't. [*Aside.*] 'Tis time to get rid of her; a young pert pimp: she'll make an incomparable bawd in a little time.

Enter a Servant, who gives HEARTFREE *a Letter.*

Bel. Heartfree your husband, say you? 'Tis impossible!

L. Fan. Would to kind Heaven it were; but 'tis too true; and in the world there lives not such a wretch. I'm young; and either I have been flattered by my friends, as well as glass, or Nature has been kind and generous to me. I had a fortune too was greater far than he could ever hope for; but with my heart I am robbed of all the rest. I am slighted and I'm beggared both at once; I have scarce a bare subsistence from the villain, yet dare complain to none; for he has sworn, if ever 'tis known I am his wife, he'll murder me. [*Weeping.*

Bel. The traitor!

L. Fan. I accidentally was told he courted you: charity soon prevailed upon me to prevent your misery; and, as you see, I am still so generous, even to him, as not to suffer he should do any thing for which the law might take away his life. [*Weeping.*

Bel. Poor creature! How I pity her!

[*They continue talking aside.*

Heart. [*Aside.*] Death and the devil!—Let me read it again. [*Reads.*] "Though I have a particular reason not to let you know who I am till I see you, yet you'll easily believe 'tis a faithful friend that gives you this advice. I have lain with Belinda—(Good!)—I have a child by her—(Better and better!)—which is now out at nurse—(Heaven be praised!)—and I think the foundation laid for another.—(Ha!—old true-penny!)—No rack could have tortured this story from me, but friendship has done it. I heard of your design to marry her, and could not see you abused. Make use of my advice, but keep my secret till I ask you for't again. Adieu." [*Exit L.* FAN.

Con. [*To* BELINDA.] Come, madam, shall we send for the parson? I doubt here's no business for the lawyers; younger brothers have nothing to settle but their hearts, and that I believe my friend here has already done very faithfully.

Bel. [*Scornfully.*] Are you sure, sir, there are no old mortgages upon it?

Heart. [*Coldly.*] If you think there are, madam, it mayn't be amiss to defer the marriage till you are sure they are paid off.

Bel. We'll defer it as long as you please, sir.

Heart. The more time we take to consider on't, madam, the less apt we shall be to commit oversights; therefore, if you please, we will put it off for just nine months.

Bel. Guilty consciences make men cowards.

Heart. And they make women desperate.

Bel. I don't wonder you want time to resolve.

Heart. I don't wonder you are so quickly determined.

Bel. What does the fellow mean?

Heart. What does the lady mean?

Sir John. Zoons, what do you both mean?

[HEART. *and* BEL. *walk chafing about.*

Rasor. [*Aside.*] Here is so much sport going to be spoiled, it makes me ready to weep again. A pox o' this impertinent Lady Fancyful, and her plots, and her Frenchwoman too; she's a whimsical, ill-natured bitch, and when I have got my bones broke in her service, 'tis ten to one but my recompence is a clap: I hear them tittering without still. I'cod, I'll e'en go lug them both in by the ears, and discover the plot, to secure my pardon. [*Exit.*

Con. Pr'ythee explain, Heartfree.

Heart. A fair deliverance; thank my stars and my friend.

Bel. 'Tis well it went no farther: a base fellow!

L. Brute. What can be the meaning of all this?

Bel. What's his meaning, I don't know; but mine is, that if I had married him, I had had no husband.

Heart. And what's her meaning, I don't know; but mine is, that if I had married her, I had had wife enough.

Sir John. Your people of wit have got such cramp ways of expressing themselves, they seldom comprehend one another. Pox take you both! will you speak, that you may be understood:

Enter RASOR *in Sackcloth, pulling in Lady* FANCYFUL *and* MADEMOISELLE.

Rasor. If they won't, here comes an interpreter.

L. Brute. Heavens! What have we here?

Rasor. A villain—but a repenting villain.

All. Rasor!

L. Brute. What means this?

Rasor. Nothing, without my pardon.

L. Brute. What pardon do you want?

Rasor. Imprimis. Your ladyship's, for a damnable lie made upon your spotless virtue, and set to the tune of Spring Garden. [*To Sir* JOHN.] Next, at my generous master's feet I bend, for interrupting his more noble thoughts with phantoms of disgraceful cuckoldom. [*To* CONSTANT.] Thirdly, I to this gentleman apply, for making him the hero of my romance. [*To* HEARTFREE.] Fourthly, your pardon, noble sir, I ask, for clandestinely marrying you, without either bidding of banns, bishop's licence, friend's consent, or your own knowledge. [*To* BELINDA.] And lastly, to my good young lady's clemency I come, for pretending the corn was sowed in the ground, before ever the plough had been in the field.

Sir John. [*Aside.*] So that, after all, 'tis a moot point whether I am a cuckold or not.

Bel. Well, sir, upon condition you confess all, I'll pardon you myself, and try to obtain as much from the rest of the company. But I must know then who 'tis has put you upon all this mischief.

Rasor. Satan and his equipage: woman tempted me, vice weakened me—and so the devil overcame me: as fell Adam, so fell I.

Bel. Then pray, Mr Adam, will you make us acquainted with your Eve?

Rasor. [*To* MADEM.] Unmask, for the honour of France.

All. Mademoiselle!

Madem. Me ask ten tousand pardon of all de good company.

Sir John. Why, this mystery thickens, instead of clearing up. [*To* RASOR.] You son of a whore you, put us out of our pain.

Rasor. One moment brings sunshine. [*Shewing* MADEM.] 'Tis true, this is the woman that tempted me, but this is the serpent that tempted the woman; and if my prayers might be heard, her punishment for so doing should be like the serpent's of old——[*Pulls off Lady* FANCYFUL'S *mask*]—she should lie upon her face all the days of her life.

All. Lady Fancyful!

Bel. Impertinent!

L. Brute. Ridiculous!

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Bel. I hope your ladyship will give me leave to wish you joy, since you have owned your marriage yourself.—[*To* HEART.] I vow 'twas strangely wicked in you to think of another wife, when you have one already so charming as her ladyship.

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

L. Fun. [*Aside.*] Confusion seize 'em, as it seizes me!

Madem. Que le diable etouffe ce maraut de Rasor!

Bel. Your ladyship seems disordered: a breeding qualm, perhaps, Mr Heartfree: your bottle of Hungary water to your lady. Why, madam, he stands as unconcerned as if he were your husband in earnest.

L. Fun. Your mirth's as nauseous as yourself. Belinda, you think you triumph over a rival now: Helas! ma pauvre fille. Where'er I am a rival, there's no cause for mirth. No, my poor wretch, 'tis from another principle I have acted. I knew that thing there would make so perverse a husband, and you so impertinent a wife, that lest your mutual plagues should make you both run mad, I charitably would have broke the match. He, he, he, he, he!

[*Exit, laughing affectedly,* MADEM. *following her.*

Madem. He, he, he, he, he!

All. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Sir John. [*Aside.*] Why now, this woman will be married to somebody too.

Bel. Poor creature! What a passion she is in! but I forgive her.

Heart. Since you have so much goodness for her, I hope you'll pardon my offence too, madam.

Bel. There will be no great difficulty in that, since I am guilty of an equal fault.

Heart. So, madam, now had the parson but done his business——

Bel. You'd be half weary of your bargain.

Heart. No, sure, I might dispense with one night's lodging.

Bel. I am ready to try, sir.

Heart. Then let's to church;
And if it be our chance to disagree——

Bel. Take heed—the surly husband's fate you see.

Sir John. Surly I may be, stubborn I am not,
For I have both forgiven and forgot;
If so, be these our judges, Mrs Pert,
'Tis more by my goodness, than your desert.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY LADY BRUTE AND BELINDA.

L. Brute. No epilogue!
Bel. I swear I know of none.
L. Brute. Lord! How shall we excuse it to the town?
Bel. Why, we must e'en say something of our own.
L. Brute. Our own! Ay, that must needs be precious stuff.
Bel. I'll lay my life they'll like it well enough. Come, faith, begin.
L. Brute. Excuse me!—after you.
Bel. Nay, pardon me for that, I know my cue.
L. Brute. O, for the world I would not have precedence.
Bel. O Lord!
L. Brute. I swear——
Bel. O fie!
L. Brute. I'm all obedience.
First, then, know all, before our doom is fix'd,
The third day is for us——
Bel. Nay, and the sixth.
L. Brute. We speak not from the poet now, nor is it
His cause—(I want a rhyme)—
Bel. That we solicit.

L. Brute. Then sure you cannot have the hearts to be severe,
And damn us———
Bel. Damn us! Let 'em, if they dare.
L. Brute. Why, if they should, what punishment remains?
Bel. Eternal exile from behind our scenes.
L. Brute. But if they're kind, that sentence we'll recal:
We can be grateful———
Bel. And have wherewithall.
L. Brute. But as grand treaties hope not to be trusted,
Before preliminaries are adjusted,
Bel. You know the time, and we appoint this place,
Where, if you please, we'll meet, and sign the peace.

THE

CONFEDERACY.

BY

VANBURGH.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY A SHABBY POET.

Ye gods! what crime had my poor father done,
That you should make a poet of his son?
Or is't for some great services of his,
Y'are pleased to compliment his boy——with this? [*Shewing his crown of laurel.*

The honour, I must needs confess, is great,
If, with his crown, you'd tell him where to eat.
'Tis well——But I have more complaints—look here! [*Shewing his ragged coat.*
Hark ye:—D'ye think this suit good winter wear?
In a cold morning,——whu——at a lord's gate,
How you have let the porter let me wait!
You'll say, perhaps, you knew I'd get no harm;
You'd given me fire enough to keep me warm.
Ah——
A world of blessings to that fire we owe;
Without it I'd ne'er made this princely show.
I have a brother too, now in my sight,
[*Looking behind the scenes.*
A busy man amongst us here to-night:
Your fire has made him play a thousand pranks,
For which, no doubt, you've had his daily thanks.
He'as thank'd you first for all his decent plays,
Where he so nick'd it, when he writ for praise;
Next, for his meddling with some folk in black,
And bringing—souse—a priest upon his back;
For building houses here, t'oblige the peers,
And fetching all their house about his ears;
For a new play he'as now thought fit to write,
To soothe the town—which they—will damn to-night.

These benefits are such, no man can doubt
But he'll go on, and set your fancy out,
Till, for reward of all his noble deeds,
At last, like other sprightly folks, he speeds;
Has this great recompence fixed on his brow
As fam'd Parnassus; has your leave to bow
And walk about the streets—equipp'd—as I am now.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

GRIPE, } *two rich Money-scriveners.*
MONEYTRAP, }
DICK, *a Gamester, son to Mrs Amlet.*
BRASS, *his Companion, passes for his valet de chambre.*
CLIP, *a Goldsmith.*
JESSAMIN, *Foot-boy to* CLARISSA.

WOMEN.

CLARISSA, *Wife to* GRIPE, *an expensive, luxurious woman, a great admirer of quality.*
ARAMINTA, *Wife to* MONEYTRAP, *very intimate with* CLARISSA, *of the same humour.*
CORINNA, *Daughter to* GRIPE *by a former wife, a good fortune, young, and kept very close by her father.*
FLIPPANTA, CLARISSA'S *Maid.*
Mrs AMLET, *a Seller of all sorts of private Affairs to the Ladies.*
Mrs CLOGGIT, *her Neighbour.*

SCENE,—*London.*—*The Time equal to that of the Representation.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Covent-Garden.*

Enter Mrs AMLET *and Mrs* CLOGGIT, *meeting.*

Mrs Am. Good morrow, neighbour, good morrow, neighbour Cloggit. How does all at your house this morning?

Mrs Clog. Thank you kindly, Mrs Amlet, thank you kindly; how do you do, I pray?

Mrs Am. At the old rate, neighbour, poor and honest: These are hard times, good lack.

Mrs Clog. If they are hard with you, what are they with us? You have a good trade going; all the great folks in town help you off with your merchandise.

Mrs Am. Yes, they do help us off with 'em indeed; they buy all.

Mrs Clog. And pay——

Mrs Am. For some.

Mrs Clog. Well, 'tis a thousand pities, Mrs Amlet, they are not as ready at one as they are at t'other; for, not to wrong 'em, they give very good rates.

Mrs Am. O, for that let us do 'em justice, neighbour; they never make two words about the price; all they haggle about is the day of payment.

Mrs Clog. There's all the dispute, as you say.

Mrs Am. But that's a wicked one. For my part, neighbour, I'm just tired off my legs with trotting after 'em; besides, it eats out all our profit. Would you believe it, Mrs Cloggit, I have worn out four pair of pattens, with following my old lady Youthful, for one set of false teeth, and but three pots of paint.

Mrs Clog. Look you there now.

Mrs Am. If they would but once let me get enough by 'em to keep a coach to carry me a dunning after 'em, there would be some conscience in it.

Mrs Clog. Ay, that were something. But now you talk of conscience, Mrs Amlet—how do you speed amongst your city customers?

Mrs Am. My city customers! Now, by my truth, neighbour, between the city and the court (with reverence be it spoken) there's not a—— to choose. My ladies in the city, in times past, were as full of gold as they were of religion, and as punctual in their payments as they were in their prayers; but since they have set their minds upon quality, adieu one, adieu t'other; their money and their consciences are gone, Heaven knows where. There's not a goldsmith's wife to be found in town, but is as hard-hearted as an ancient judge, and as poor as a towering duchess.

Mrs Clog. But what the murrain have they to do with quality? why don't their husbands make 'em mind their shops?

Mrs Am. Their husbands! their husbands, sayest thou, woman? Alack, alack, they mind their husbands, neighbour, no more than they do a sermon.

Mrs Clog. Good lack-a-day, that women born of sober parents should be prone to follow ill examples! But now we talk of quality—when did you hear of your son Richard, Mrs Amlet? My daughter Flipp says she met him t'other day in a laced coat, with three fine ladies, his footman at his heels, and as gay as a bridegroom.

Mrs Am. Is it possible? Ah, the rogue! Well, neighbour, all's well that ends well; but Dick will be hanged.

Mrs Clog. That were pity.

Mrs Am. Pity indeed; for he's a hopeful young man to look on; but he leads a life——Well—— where he has it, Heaven knows; but they say he pays his club with the best of 'em. I have seen him but once these three months, neighbour, and then the varlet wanted money; but I bid him march, and march he did to some purpose; for in less than an hour, back comes my gentleman into the house, walks to and fro in the room, with his wig over his shoulder, his hat on one side, whistling a minuet, and tossing a purse of gold from one hand to t'other, with no other respect (Heaven bless us!) than if it had been an orange. Sirrah, says I, where have you got that? He answers me never a word, but sets his arms a kimbo, cocks his saucy hat in my face, turns about upon his ungracious heel, as much as to say, kiss——and I've never set eye on him since.

Mrs Clog. Look you there now; to see what the youth of this age are come to.

Mrs Am. See what they will come to, neighbour. Heaven shield, I say, but Dick's upon the gallop. Well, I must bid you good morrow: I'm going where I doubt I shall meet but a sorry welcome.

Mrs Clog. To get in some old debt, I'll warrant you?

Mrs Am. Neither better nor worse.

Mrs Clog. From a lady of quality?

Mrs Am. No, she's but a scrivener's wife; but she lives as well, and pays as ill as the stateliest countess of 'em all. [*Exeunt several ways.*

Enter BRASS, *solus.*

Brass. Well, surely through the world's wide extent there never appeared so impudent a fellow as my schoolfellow Dick; pass himself upon the town for a gentleman, drop into all the best company with an easy air, as if his natural element were in the sphere of quality; when the rogue had a kettle-drum to his father, who was hanged for robbing a church, and has a pedlar to his mother, who carries her shop under her arm. But here he comes.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Well, Brass, what news? Hast thou given my letter to Flippanta?

Brass. I'm but just come; I ha'n't knocked at

the door yet. But I have a damned piece of news for you.

Dick. As how?

Brass. We must quit this country.

Dick. We'll be hanged first.

Brass. So you will, if you stay.

Dick. Why, what's the matter?

Brass. There's a storm a-coming.

Dick. From whence?

Brass. From the worst point in the compass,—the law.

Dick. The law! Why, what have I to do with the law?

Brass. Nothing; and therefore it has something to do with you.

Dick. Explain.

Brass. You know you cheated a young fellow at piquet, t'other day, of the money he had to raise his company.

Dick. Well, what then?

Brass. Why, he's sorry he lost it.

Dick. Who doubts that?

Brass. Ay, but that is not all; he's such a fool to think of complaining on't.

Dick. Then I must be so wise to stop his mouth.

Brass. How?

Dick. Give him a little back; if that won't do, strangle him.

Brass. You are very quick in your methods.

Dick. Men must be so that will dispatch business.

Brass. Hark you, colonel; your father died in's bed?

Dick. He might have done, if he had not been a fool.

Brass. Why, he robbed a church.

Dick. Ay, but he forgot to make sure of the sexton.

Brass. Are not you a great rogue?

Dick. Or I should wear worse clothes.

Brass. Hark you; I would advise you to change your life.

Dick. And turn ballad-singer?

Brass. Not so neither.

Dick. What then?

Brass. Why, if you can get this young wench, reform, and live honest.

Dick. That's the way to be starved.

Brass. No, she has money enough to buy you a good place, and pay me into the bargain, for helping her to so good a match. You have but this throw left to save you; for you are not ignorant, youngster, that your morals begin to be pretty well known about town: have a care your noble birth and your honourable relations are not discovered too; there needs but that to have you tossed in a blanket, for the entertainment of the first company of ladies you intrude into; and then, like a dutiful son, you may daggle about with your mother, and sell paint: she's old and weak, and wants somebody to carry her goods after her. How like a dog will you look, with a pair of plod shoes, your hair cropped up to your ears, and a band-box under your arm!

Dick. Why, faith, Brass, I think thou art in the right on't: I must fix my affairs quickly, or Madam Fortune will be playing some of her bitch-tricks with me; therefore I'll tell thee what we'll do: we'll pursue this old rogue's daughter heartily; we'll cheat his family to purpose, and they shall atone for the rest of mankind.

Brass. Have at her then, and I'll about your business presently.

Dick. One kiss—and success attend thee.

[*Exit* DICK.

Brass. A great rogue—Well, I say nothing; but when I have got the thing into a good posture, he shall sign and seal, or I'll have him tumbled out of the house like a cheese. Now for Flippanta. [*He knocks.*

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. Who's that? Brass!

Brass. Flippanta!

Flip. What want you, rogue's-face?

Brass. Is your mistress dressed?

Flip. What, already? Is the fellow drunk?

Brass. Why, with respect to her looking-glass, it's almost two.

Flip. What then, fool?

Brass. Why, then it's time for the mistress of the house to come down, and look after her family.

Flip. Pr'ythee don't be an owl. Those that go to bed at night may rise in the morning; we that go to bed in the morning rise in the afternoon.

Brass. When does she make her visits then?

Flip. By candle light: it helps off a muddy complexion: we women hate inquisitive sunshine. But do you know that my lady is going to turn good housewife?

Brass. What, is she going to die?

Flip. Die!

Brass. Why, that's the only way to save money for her family.

Flip. No; but she has thought of a project to save chair hire.

Brass. As how?

Flip. Why, all the company she used to keep abroad, she now intends shall meet at her own house. Your master has advised her to set up a basset-table.

Brass. Nay, if he advised her to it, it's right; but has she acquainted her husband with it yet?

Flip. What to do? When the company meet, he'll see them.

Brass. Nay, that's true; as you say, he'll know it soon enough.

Flip. Well, I must be gone: have you any business with my lady?

Brass. Yes; as ambassador from Araminta, I have a letter for her.

Flip. Give it me.

Brass. Hold——and as first minister of state to the colonel, I have an affair to communicate to thee.

Flip. What is't? Quick.

Brass. Why——he's in love.

Flip. With what?

Brass. A woman—and her money together.

Flip. Who is she?

Brass. Corinna.

Flip. What would he be at?

Brass. At her—if she's at leisure.

Flip. Which way?

Brass. Honourably—He has ordered me to demand her of thee in marriage.

Flip. Of me?

Brass. Why, when a man of quality has a mind to a city-fortune, wouldst have him apply to her father and mother?

Flip. No.

Brass. No, so I think; men of our end of the town are better bred than to use ceremony. With a long periwig we strike the lady; with a you-know-what we soften the maid; and when the parson has done his job, we open the affair to the family. Will you slip this letter into her prayer-book, my little queen? It's a very passionate one—It's sealed with a heart and a dagger; you may see by that what he intends to do with himself.

Flip. Are there any verses in it? If not, I won't touch it.

Brass. Not one word in prose; it's dated in rhyme. [*She takes it.*

Flip. Well—but have you brought nothing else?

Brass. Gad forgive me; I'm the forgetfullest dog—I have a letter for you too—here—'tis in a purse; but it's in prose; you won't touch it.

Flip. Yes, hang it, it is not good to be too dainty.

Brass. How useful a virtue is humility! Well, child, we shall have an answer to-morrow, sha'n't we?

Flip. I cann't promise you that, for our young gentlewoman is not so often in my way as she would be. Her father (who is a citizen from the foot to the forehead of him) lets her seldom converse with her mother-in-law and me, for fear she should learn the airs of a woman of quality. But I'll take the first occasion. See, there's my lady; go in and deliver your letter to her. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Parlour.*

Enter CLARISSA, *followed by* FLIPPANTA *and* BRASS.

Clar. No messages this morning from any body, Flippanta? Lard, how dull that is! O, there's Brass: I did not see thee, Brass. What news dost thou bring?

Brass. Only a letter from Araminta, madam.

Clar. Give it me—open it for me, Flippanta; I am so lazy to-day. [*Sitting down.*

Brass. [*To* FLIP.] Be sure now you deliver my master's as carefully as I do this.

Flip. Don't trouble thyself; I'm no novice.

Clar. [*To* BRASS.] 'Tis well; there needs no answer, since she'll be here so soon.

Brass. Your ladyship has no farther commands then?

Clar. Not at this time, honest Brass. Flippanta! [*Exit* BRASS.

Flip. Madam.

Clar. My husband's in love.

Flip. In love!

Clar. With Araminta.

Flip. Impossible!

Clar. This letter from her is to give me an account of it.

Flip. Methinks you are not very much alarmed.

Clar. No; thou knowest I'm not much tortured with jealousy.

Flip. Nay, you are much in the right on't, madam; for jealousy's a city passion; 'tis a thing unknown amongst people of quality.

Clar. Fie! a woman must indeed be of a mechanic mould, who is either troubled or pleased with any thing her husband can do to her. Pr'ythee mention him no more; 'tis the dullest theme.

Flip. 'Tis splenetic indeed. But when once you open your basset-table, I hope that will put him out of your head.

Clar. Alas, Flippanta, I begin to grow weary even of the thoughts of that too.

Flip. How so?

Clar. Why, I have thought on't a day and a night already, and four-and-twenty hours, thou knowest, is enough to make one weary of any thing.

Flip. Now, by my conscience, you have more woman in you than all your sex together: You never know what you would have.

Clar. Thou mistakest the thing quite. I always know what I lack, but I am never pleased with what I have. The want of a thing is perplexing enough, but the possession of it is intolerable.

Flip. Well, I don't know what you are made of, but other women would think themselves bless'd in your case: handsome, witty, loved by every body, and of so happy a composure, to care a fig for nobody. You have no one passion but that of your pleasures, and you have in me a servant devoted to all your desires, let them be as extravagant as they will: yet all this is nothing: you can still be out of humour.

Clar. Alas, I have but too much cause.

Flip. Why, what have you to complain of?

Clar. Alas, I have more subjects for spleen than one: Is it not a most horrible thing that I should be but a scrivener's wife?——Come——don't flatter me; don't you think Nature designed me for something *plus elevé*?

Flip. Nay, that's certain; but, on the other side, methinks you ought to be in some measure content, since you live like a woman of quality, tho' you are none.

Clar. O fie! the very quintessence of it is wanting.

Flip. What's that?

Clar. Why, I dare abuse no body: I'm afraid to affront people, though I don't like their faces; or to ruin their reputations, though they pique me to it, by taking ever so much pains to preserve 'em: I dare not raise a lie of a man, though he neglects to make love to me; nor report a woman to be a fool, tho' she's handsomer than I am. In short, I dare not so much as bid

my footman kick the people out of doors, though they come to ask me for what I owe them.

Flip. All this is very hard indeed.

Clar. Ah, Flippanta, the perquisites of quality are of an unspeakable value.

Flip. They are of some use, I must confess; but we must not expect to have every thing. You have wit and beauty, and a fool to your husband: come, come, madam, that's a good portion for one.

Clar. Alas, what signifies beauty and wit, when one dares neither jilt the men, nor abuse the women? 'Tis a sad thing, Flippanta, when wit's confined; 'tis worse than the rising of the lights: I have been sometimes almost choaked with scandal, and durst not cough it up, for want of being a countess.

Flip. Poor lady!

Clar. O! liberty is a fine thing, Flippanta; it's a great help in conversation to have leave to say what one will. I have seen a woman of quality, who has not had one grain of wit, entertain a whole company the most agreeably in the world, only with her malice. But 'tis in vain to repine: I can't mend my condition till my husband dies; so I'll say no more on't, but think of making the most of the state I am in.

Flip. That's your best way, madam; and in order to it, pray consider how you'll get some ready money to set your basset-table going; for that's necessary.

Clar. Thou say'st true; but what trick I shall play my husband to get some, I don't know; for my pretence of losing my diamond necklace has put the man into such a passion, I'm afraid he won't hear reason.

Flip. No matter; he begins to think 'tis lost in earnest; so I fancy you may venture to sell it, and raise money that way.

Clar. That cann't be, for he has left odious notes with all the goldsmiths in town.

Flip. Well, we must pawn it then.

Clar. I'm quite tired with dealing with those pawn-brokers.

Flip. I'm afraid you'll continue the trade a great while, for all that. [*Aside.*

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam, there's the woman below that sells paint and patches, iron boddice, false teeth, and all sorts of things to the ladies; I cann't think of her name.

Flip. 'Tis Mrs Amlet; she wants money.

Clar. Well, I ha'n't enough for myself; it's an unreasonable thing she should think I have any for her.

Flip. She's a troublesome jade.

Clar. So are all people that come a dunning.

Flip. What will you do with her?

Clar. I have just now thought on't. She's very rich, that woman is, Flippanta; I'll borrow some money of her.

Flip. Borrow! Sure you jest, madam.

Clar. No, I'm in earnest; I give thee commission to do it for me.

Flip. Me!

Clar. Why dost thou stare, and look so ungainly? Don't I speak to be understood?

Flip. Yes, I understand you well enough; but Mrs Amlet——

Clar. But Mrs Amlet must lend me some money: where shall I have any to pay her else?

Flip. That's true; I never thought of that, truly. But here she is.

Enter Mrs AMLET.

Clar. How d'you do? How d'you do, Mrs Amlet? I ha'n't seen you these thousand years, and yet I believe I'm down in your books.

Mrs Am. O, madam, I don't come for that, alack.

Flip. Good morrow, Mrs Amlet.

Mrs Am. Good morrow, Mrs Flippanta.

Clar. How much am I indebted to you, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. Nay, if your ladyship desires to see your bill, I believe I may have it about me.—There, madam, if it be not too much fatigue to you to look it over.

Clar. Let me see it, for I hate to be in debt, where I am obliged to pay. [*Aside.*] [*Reads.*] "*Imprimis*, For bolstering out the Countess of Crump's left hip"——O fie! this does not belong to me.

Mrs Am. I beg your ladyship's pardon: I mistook indeed: 'tis a countess's bill I have writ out to little purpose. I furnished her two years ago with three pair of hips, and am not paid for them yet: but some are better customers than some. There's your ladyship's bill, madam.

Clar. "For the idea of a new-invented commode"——Ay, this may be mine, but 'tis of a preposterous length. Do you think I can waste time to read every article, Mrs Amlet? I'd as lief read a sermon.

Mrs Am. Alack-a-day, there's no need of fatiguing yourself at that rate; cast an eye only, if your honour pleases, upon the sum total.

Clar. Total, fifty-six pounds—and odd things.

Flip. But six-and-fifty pounds!

Mrs Am. Nay, another body would have made it twice as much; but there's a blessing goes along with a moderate profit.

Clar. Flippanta, go to my cashier; let him give you six-and-fifty pounds. Make haste. Don't you hear me? Six-and-fifty pounds. Is it so difficult to be comprehended?

Flip. No, madam; I, I comprehend six-and-fifty pounds, but—

Clar. But go and fetch it then.

Flip. What she means I don't know; [*Aside;*] b t I shall, I suppose, before I bring her the money. [*Exit* FLIP.

Clar. [*Setting her hair in a pocket glass.*] The trade you follow gives you a great deal of trouble, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. Alack-a-day, a world of pain, madam, and yet there's small profit, as your honour sees by your bill.

Clar. Poor woman! Sometimes you have great losses, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. I have two thousand pounds owing me, of which I shall never get ten shillings.

Clar. Poor woman! You have a great charge of children, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. Only one wicked rogue, madam, who I think will break my heart.

Clar. Poor woman!

Mrs Am. He'll be hang'd, madam—that will be the end of him. Where he gets it, Heaven knows; but he's always shaking his heels with the ladies, and his elbows with the lords. He's as fine as a prince, and as gim as the best of them; but the ungracious rogue tells all he comes near that his mother is dead, and I am but his nurse.

Clar. Poor woman!

Mrs Am. Alas, madam, he's like the rest of the world; every body's for appearing to be more than they are, and that ruins all.

Clar. Well, Mrs Amlet, you'll excuse me: I have a little business: Flippanta will bring you your money presently. Adieu, Mrs Amlet.

[*Exit* CLARISSA.

Mrs Am. I return your honour many thanks. [*Sola.*] Ah, there's my good lady, not so much as read her bill: if the rest were like her, I should soon have money enough to go as fine as Dick himself.

Enter DICK.

Dick. Sure Flippanta must have given my letter by this time. [*Aside.*] I long to know how it has been received.

Mrs Am. *Misericorde!* what do I see!

Dick. Fiends and hags—the witch my mother!

Mrs Am. Nay, 'tis he! Ah, my poor Dick, what art thou doing here?

Dick. What a misfortune! [*Aside.*

Mrs Am. Good Lard! how bravely decked thou art. But it's all one; I am thy mother still; and though thou art a wicked child, Nature will speak: I love thee still. Ah, Dick, my poor Dick!

[*Embracing him.*

Dick. Blood and thunder! will you ruin me?

[*Breaking from her.*

Mrs Am. Ah, the blasphemous rogue, how he swears!

Dick. You destroy all my hopes.

Mrs Am. Will your mother's kiss destroy you, varlet? Thou art an ungracious bird: kneel down and ask my blessing, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies!

Mrs Am. Ah, he's a proper young man; see what a shape he has. Ah, poor child!

[*Running to embrace him, he still avoiding her.*

Dick. Oons! keep off: the woman's mad. If any body comes, my fortune's lost.

Mrs Am. What fortune, ha? Speak, graceless. Ah, Dick, thou'lt be hanged, Dick!

Dick. Good, dear mother, now, don't call me Dick here.

Mrs Am. Not call thee Dick! Is it not thy name? What shall I call thee? Mr Amlet? ha? Art not thou a presumptuous rascal? Hark you, sirrah, I hear of your tricks: You disown me for your mother, and say I am but your nurse. Is not this true?

Dick. No, I love you, I respect you, [*Taking her hand,*] I am all duty. But if you discover me here, you ruin the fairest prospect that man ever had.

Mrs Am. What prospect? ha? Come, this is a lie now.

Dick. No, my honoured parent, what I say is true: I'm about a great fortune. I'll bring you home a daughter-in-law in a coach and six horses, if you'll but be quiet: I can't tell you more now.

Mrs Am. Is it possible?

Dick. 'Tis true, by Jupiter.

Mrs Am. My dear lad——

Dick. For Heaven's sake——

Mrs Am. But tell me, Dick——

Dick. I'll follow you home in a moment, and tell you all.

Mrs Am. What a shape is there!

Dick. Pray, mother, go.

Mrs Am. I must receive some money here first, which shall go for thy wedding-dinner.

Dick. Here's somebody coming. S'death! she'll betray me. [*He makes signs to his mother.*

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Dick Good morrow, dear Flippanta: How do all the ladies within?

Flip. At your service, colonel; as far at least as my interest goes.

Mrs Am. Colonel!——Law you now, how Dick's respected! [*Aside.*

Dick. Waiting for thee, Flippanta, I was making acquaintance with this old gentlewoman here.

Mrs Am. The pretty lad, he's as impudent as a page. [*Aside.*

Dick. Who is this good woman, Flippanta?

Flip. A gin of all trades; an old daggling cheat, that hobbles about from house to house, to bubble the ladies of their money. I have a small business of yours in my pocket, colonel.

Dick. An answer to my letter?

Flip. So quick indeed! No, it's your letter itself.

Dick. Hast thou not given it then yet?

Flip. I ha'n't had an opportunity; but it won't be long first. Won't you go in and see my lady?

Dick. Yes, I'll go make her a short visit. But, dear Flippanta, don't forget: my life and fortune are in your hands.

Flip. Ne'er fear; I'll take care of 'em.

Mrs Am. How he traps 'em! let Dick alone. [*Aside.*

Dick. Your servant, good madam.

[*To his Mother.* *Exit* DICK.

Mrs Am. Your honour's most devoted.—A pretty, civil, well-bred gentleman this, *Mrs Flippanta.* Pray, whom may he be?

Flip. A man of great note—Colonel Shapely.

Mrs Am. Is it possible? I have heard much of him indeed, but never saw him before: One

may see quality in every limb of him: he's a fine man, truly.

Flip. I think you are in love with him, Mrs Amlet.

Mrs Am. Alas, those days are done with me; but if I were as fair as I was once, and had as much money as some folks, Colonel Shapely should not catch cold for want of a bed-fellow. I love your men of rank; they have something in their air does so distinguish 'em from the rascality.

Flip. People of quality are fine things indeed, Mrs Amlet, if they had but a little more money; but for want of that, they are forced to do things their great souls are ashamed of. For example—here's my lady—she owes you but six-and-fifty pounds—

Mrs Am. Well.

Flip. Well, and she has it not by her to pay you.

Mrs Am. How can that be?

Flip. I don't know: her cash-keeper's out of humour: he says he has no money.

Mrs Am. What a presumptuous piece of vermin is a cash-keeper! Tell his lady he has no money?—Now, Mrs Flippanta, you may see his bags are full, by his being so saucy.

Flip. If they are, there's no help for't; he'll do what he pleases, till he comes to make up his yearly accounts.

Mrs Am. But madam plays sometimes; so when she has good fortune, she may pay me out of her winnings.

Flip. O, ne'er think of that, Mrs Amlet: if she had won a thousand pounds, she'd rather die in a jail, than pay off a farthing with it. Play-money, Mrs Amlet, amongst people of quality, is a sacred thing, and not to be profan'd: 'tis consecrated to their pleasures: 'twould be sacrilege to pay their debts with it.

Mrs Am. Why, what shall we do then? For I ha'n't one penny to buy bread.

Flip. I'll tell you—it just now comes in my head: I know my lady has a little occasion for money at this time; so—if you lend her—a hundred pounds—do you see, then she may pay you your six-and-fifty out of it.

Mrs Am. Sure, Mrs Flippanta, you think to make a fool of me.

Flip. No, the devil fetch me if I do——You shall have a diamond necklace in pawn.

Mrs Am. O ho! a pawn! That's another case. And when must she have this money?

Flip. In a quarter of an hour.

Mrs Am. Say no more. Bring the necklace to my house: it shall be ready for you.

Flip. I'll be with you in a moment.

Mrs Am. Adieu, Mrs Flippanta.

Flip. Adieu, Mrs Amlet. [*Exit* AMLET.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

So——this ready money will make us all happy: this spring will set our basset-table going, and that's a wheel will turn twenty others. My lady's young and handsome; she'll have a dozen intrigues upon her hands, before she has been twice at her prayers. So much the better: the more the grist, the richer the miller. Sure never wench got into so hopeful a place: Here's a fortune to be sold, a mistress to be debauched, and a master to be ruined. If I don't feather my nest, and get a good husband, I deserve to die both a maid and a beggar. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Mr* GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter CLARISSA *and* DICK.

Clar. What, in the name of dulness, is the matter with you, colonel? You are as studious as a cracked chemist.

Dick. My head, madam, is full of your husband.

Clar. The worst furniture for a head in the universe.

Dick. I am thinking of his passion for your friend Araminta.

Clar. Passion!—Dear colonel, give it a less violent name.

Enter BRASS.

Dick. Well, sir, what want you?

Brass. The affair I told you of goes ill. [*To* DICK, *aside.*] There's an action out.

Dick. The devil there is!

Clar. What news brings Brass?

Dick. Before gad, I cann't tell, madam; the dog will never speak out. My lord what-d'ye-call-him waits for me at my lodging: Is not that it?

Brass. Yes, sir.

Dick. Madam, I ask your pardon.

Clar. Your servant, sir.

[*Exeunt* DICK *and* BRASS.

Jessamin! [*She sits down.*

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Madam.

Clar. Where's Corinna? Call her to me, if her father ha'n't locked her up: I want her company.

Jes. Madam, her guitar-master is with her.

Clar. Psha! she's always taken up with her impertinent guitar-man. Flippanta stays an age with that old fool, Mrs Amlet; and Araminta,

before she can come abroad, is so long a placing her coquette-patch, that I must be a year without company. How insupportable is a moment's uneasiness to a woman of spirit and pleasure!

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Clar. O, art thou come at last? Pr'ythee, Flippanta, learn to move a little quicker: thou knowest how impatient I am.

Flip. Yes, when you expect money: If you had sent me to buy a prayer-book, you'd have thought I had flown.

Clar. Well, hast thou brought me any, after all?

Flip. Yes, I have brought some. There, [*Giving her a purse;*] the old hag has struck off her bill; the rest is in that purse.

Clar. 'Tis well; but take care, Flippanta, my husband don't suspect any thing of this: 'twould vex him, and I don't love to make him uneasy: so I would spare him these little sort of troubles, by keeping 'em from his knowledge.

Flip. See the tenderness she has for him, and yet he's always complaining of you.

Clar. 'Tis the nature of 'em, Flippanta: a husband is a growling animal.

Flip. How exactly you define 'em!

Clar. O! I know 'em, Flippanta: though, I confess, my poor wretch diverts me sometimes with his ill humours. I wish he would quarrel with me to-day a little, to pass away the time, for I find myself in a violent spleen.

Flip. Why, if you please to drop yourself in his way, six to four but he scolds one rubbers with you.

Clar. Ay, but thou knowest he's as uncertain as the wind; and if, instead of quarrelling with me, he should chance to be fond, he'd make me as sick as a dog.

Flip. If he's kind, you must provoke him; if he kisses you, spit in his face.

Clar. Alas, when men are in the kissing fit, (like lap-dogs,) they take that for a favour.

Flip. Nay, then, I don't know what you'll do with him.

Clar. I'll e'en do nothing at all with him.—— Flippanta. [*Yawning.*

Flip. Madam.

Clar. My hood and scarf, and a coach to the door.

Flip. Why, whither are you going?

Clar. I cann't tell yet, but I would go spend some money, since I have it.

Flip. Why, you want nothing, that I know of.

Clar. How awkward an objection now is that, as if a woman of education bought things because she wanted 'em! Quality always distinguishes itself; and therefore, as the mechanic people buy things because they have occasion for 'em, you see women of rank always buy things because they have not occasion for 'em. Now there, Flippanta, you see the difference between a woman that has breeding, and one that has none. O ho! here's Araminta come at last.

Enter ARAMINTA.

Clar. Lard, what a tedious while you have let me expect you! I was afraid you were not well. How d'ye do to-day?

Aram. As well as a woman can do, that has not slept all night.

Flip. Methinks, madam, you are pretty well awake, however.

Aram. O, 'tis not a little thing will make a woman of my vigour look drowsy.

Clar. But, pr'ythee, what was't disturbed you?

Aram. Not your husband; don't trouble yourself at least; I am not in love with him yet.

Clar. Well remembered; I had quite forgot that matter. I wish you much joy: you have made a noble conquest indeed.

Aram. But now I have subdued the country, pray is it worth my keeping? You know the ground: you have tried it.

Clar. A barren soil, Heaven can tell.

Aram. Yet if it were well cultivated, it would produce something, to my knowledge. Do you know 'tis in my power to ruin this poor thing of yours? His whole estate is at my service.

Flip. Cods-fish! strike him, madam, and let my lady go your halves. There's no sin in plundering a husband, so his wife has share of the booty.

Aram. Whenever she gives me her orders, I shall be very ready to obey 'em.

Clar. Why, as odd a thing as such a project may seem, Araminta, I believe I shall have a little serious discourse with you about it. But, pr'ythee, tell me how you have passed the night; for I am sure your mind has been roving upon some pretty thing or other.

Aram. Why, I have been studying all the ways my brain could produce to plague my husband.

Clar. No wonder, indeed, you look so fresh this morning, after the satisfaction of such pleasing ideas all night.

Aram. Why, can a woman do less than study mischief, when she has tumbled and tossed herself into a burning fever for want of sleep, and sees a fellow lie snoring by her side, stock-still, in a fine breathing sweat?

Clar. Now see the difference of women's tempers: If my dear would make but one nap of his whole life, and only waken to make his will, I should be the happiest wife in the universe. But we'll discourse more of these matters as we go, for I must make a tour among the shops.

Aram. I have a coach waits at the door: we'll talk of 'em as we rattle along.

Clar. The best place in nature; for you know a hackney-coach is a natural enemy to a husband.

[*Exeunt* CLAR. *and* ARAM.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

What a pretty little pair of amiable persons are there gone to hold a council of war together! Poor birds! What would they do with their time, if plaguing their husbands did not help 'em to employment! Well, if idleness be the root of all evil, then matrimony's good for something; for it

sets many a poor woman to work. But here comes miss. I hope I shall help her into the holy state too, ere long: And when she's once there, if she don't play her part as well as the best of 'em, I'm mistaken. Ha'n't I lost the letter I'm to give her?—No, here 'tis; so, now we shall see how pure nature will work with her, for art she knows none yet.

Enter CORINNA.

Cor. What does my mother-in-law want with me, Flippanta? They tell me she was asking for me.

Flip. She's just gone out, so I suppose 'twas no great business.

Cor. Then I'll go into my chamber again.

Flip. Nay, hold a little, if you please. I have some business with you myself, of more concern than what she had to say to you.

Cor. Make haste then, for you know my father won't let me keep your company; he says, you'll spoil me.

Flip. I spoil you! He's an unworthy man, to give you such ill impressions of a woman of my honour.

Cor. Nay, never take it to heart, Flippanta, for I don't believe a word he says. But he does so plague me with his continual scolding, I'm almost weary of my life.

Flip. Why, what is't he finds fault with?

Cor. Nay, I don't know, for I never mind him; when he has babbled for two hours together, methinks I have heard a mill going, that's all: it does not at all change my opinion, Flippanta: it only makes my head ache.

Flip. Nay, if you can bear it so, you are not to be pitied so much as I thought.

Cor. Not pitied! Why, is it not a miserable thing, such a young creature as I am should be kept in perpetual solitude, with no other company but a parcel of old fumbling masters, to teach me geography, arithmetic, philosophy, and a thousand useless things? Fine entertainment, indeed, for a young maid at sixteen! Methinks one's time might be better employed.

Flip. Those things will improve your wit.

Cor. Fiddle, faddle! Ha'n't I wit enough already? My mother-in-law has learned none of this trumpery, and is not she as happy as the day is long?

Flip. Then you envy her, I find?

Cor. And well I may. Does she not do what she has a mind to, in spite of her husband's teeth?

Flip. Look you there now. [*Aside.*] If she has not already conceived that as the supreme blessing of life!

Cor. I'll tell you what, Flippanta; if my mother-in-law would but stand by me a little, and encourage me, and let me keep her company, I'd rebel against my father to-morrow, and throw all my books in the fire. Why, he cann't touch a groat of my portion: do you know that, Flippanta?

Flip. So——I shall spoil her. [*Aside.*] Pray Heaven the girl don't debauch me.

Cor. Look you: In short, he may think what he pleases; he may think himself wise; but thoughts are free, and I may think in my turn.—I'm but a girl, 'tis true, and a fool too, if you believe him; but let him know, a foolish girl may make a wise man's heart ache; so he had as good be quiet.—Now it's out.

Flip. Very well, I love to see a young woman have spirit: it's a sign she'll come to something.

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, if you would but encourage me, you'll find me quite another thing. I'm a devilish girl in the bottom. I wish you'd but let me make one amongst you.

Flip. That never can be, till you are married. Come, examine your strength a little. Do you think you durst venture upon a husband?

Cor. A husband! Why, a—if you would but encourage me. Come, Flippanta, be a true friend now. I'll give you advice, when I have got a little more experience. Do you in your very conscience and soul think I am old enough to be married?

Flip. Old enough! Why, you are sixteen, are you not?

Cor. Sixteen! I am sixteen, two months, and odd days, woman. I keep an exact account.

Flip. The deuce you are!

Cor. Why, do you then truly and sincerely think I am old enough?

Flip. I do, upon my faith, child.

Cor. Why then, to deal as fairly with you, Flippanta, as you do with me, I have thought so any time these three years.

Flip. Now I find you have more wit than ever I thought you had; and to shew you what an opinion I have of your discretion, I'll shew you a thing I thought to have thrown in the fire.

Cor. What is it, for Jupiter's sake?

Flip. Something will make your heart chuck within you.

Cor. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. What do you think it is?

Cor. I don't know, nor I don't care, but I'm mad to have it.

Flip. It's a four-cornered thing.

Cor. What, like a cardinal's cap?

Flip. No, 'tis worth a whole conclave of 'em. How do you like it? [*Shewing the letter.*

Cor. O lard! A letter!—Is there ever a token in it?

Flip. Yes, and a precious one too. There's a handsome young gentleman's heart.

Cor. A handsome young gentleman's heart!—[*Aside.*] Nay, then, it's time to look grave.

Flip. There.

Cor. I sha'n't touch it.

Flip. What's the matter now

Cor. I sha'n't receive it.

Flip. Sure you jest.

Cor. You'll find I don't. I understand myself better than to take letters, when I don't know who they are from.

Flip. I am afraid I commended your wit too soon.

Cor. 'Tis all one: I sha'n't touch it, unless I know who it comes from.

Flip. Hey-day! open it, and you'll see.

Cor. Indeed I shall not.

Flip. Well——then I must return it where I had it.

Cor. That won't serve your turn, madam. My father must have an account of this.

Flip. Sure you are not in earnest?

Cor. You'll find I am.

Flip. So, here's fine work. This 'tis to deal with girls before they come to know the distinction of sexes.

Cor. Confess who you had it from, and perhaps, for this once, I mayn't tell my father.

Flip. Why then, since it must out, 'twas the colonel. But why are you so scrupulous, madam?

Cor. Because if it had come from any body else—I would not have given a farthing for it.

[*Twitching it eagerly out of her hand.*

Flip. Ah, my dear little rogue. [*Kissing her.*] You frightened me out of my wits.

Cor. Let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, let me read it, I say. Um, um, um—"Cupid's"—um, um, um—"Darts"—um, um, um—"Beauty"—um—"Charms"—um, um, um—"Angel"—um—"Goddess"—um——[*Kissing the letter*]——um, um, um—"Truest lover"—hum, um—"Eternal constancy"—um, um, um——"Cruel"—um, um, um—"Racks"—um, um—"Tortures"—um, um—"Fifty daggers"—um, um—"Bleeding heart"—um, um—"Dead man."——Very well, a mighty civil letter, I promise you; not one smutty word in it: I'll go lock it up in my comb-box.

Flip. Well—but what does he say to you?

Cor. Not a word of news, Flippanta; 'tis all about business.

Flip. Does he not tell you he's in love with you?

Cor. Ay, but he told me that before.

Flip. How so? He never spoke to you.

Cor. He sent me word by his eyes.

Flip. Did he so? Mighty well! I thought you had been to learn that language.

Cor. O, but you thought wrong, Flippanta. What, because I don't go a visiting, and see the world, you think I know nothing. But you shou'd consider, Flippanta, that the more one's alone, the more one thinks; and 'tis thinking that improves a girl. I'll have you to know, when I was younger than I am now, by more than I'll boast of, I thought of things would have made you stare again.

Flip. Well, since you are so well vers'd in your business, I suppose I need not inform you, that if y u don't write your gallant an answer—he'll die.

Cor. Nay, now, Flippanta, I confess you tell me something I did not know before. Do you speak in serious sadness? Are men given to die, if their mistresses are sour to 'em?

Flip. Um—I cann't say they all die——No, I cann't say they all do; but, truly, I believe it wou'd go very hard with the colonel.

Cor. Lard, I would not have my hands in blood for thousands; and therefore, Flippanta——if you'll encourage me——

Flip. O, by all means an answer.

Cor. Well, since you say it then, I'll e'en in and do it, tho' I protest to you, (lest you should think me too forward now,) he's the only man that wears a beard, I'd ink my fingers for. May be, if I marry him, in a year or two's time I mayn't be so nice. [*Aside.*

[*Exit* CORINNA.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

Now Heaven give him joy; he's like to have a rare wife o' thee. But where there's money, a man has a plaster to his sore. They have a blessed time on't, who marry for love. See!—here comes an example——Araminta's dread lord.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Ah, Flippanta! How do you do, good Flippanta? How do you do?

Flip. Thank you, sir, well, at your service.

Mon. And how does the good family, your master, and your fair mistress? Are they at home?

Flip. Neither of them; my master has been gone out these two hours, and my lady is just gone with your wife.

Mon. Well, I won't say I have lost my labour, however, as long as I have met with you, Flippanta; for I have wish'd a great while for an opportunity to talk with you a little. You won't take it amiss, if I should ask you a few questions?

Flip. Provided you leave me to my liberty in my answers. What's this cot-quean going to pry into now? [*Aside.*

Mon. Pr'ythee, good Flippanta, how do your master and mistress live together?

Flip. Live! Why——like man and wife, generally out of humour, quarrel often, seldom agree, complain of one another; and perhaps both have reason. In short, 'tis much as 'tis at your house.

Mon. Good-lack! But whose side are you generally of?

Flip. O' the right side always—my lady's. And if you'll have me give you my opinion of these matters, sir, I do not think a husband can ever be in the right.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Little, peeking, creeping, sneaking, stingy, covetous, cowardly, dirty, cuckoldy things.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Fit for nothing but tailors and dry-nurses.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A dog in a manger, snarling and biting, to starve gentlemen with good stomachs.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A centry upon pleasure, set to be a plague on lovers, and damn poor women before their time.

Mon. A husband is indeed—

Flip. Sir, I say, he is nothing—A beetle without wings, a windmill without sails, a ship in a calm.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A bag without money—an empty bottle—dead small-beer.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A quack without drugs.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A lawyer without knavery.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A courtier without flattery.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. A king without an army—or a people with one. Have I drawn him, sir?

Mon. Why, truly, Flippanta, I cann't deny but there are some general lines of resemblance. But you know there may be exceptions.

Flip. Hark you, sir; shall I deal plainly with you? Had I got a husband, I wou'd put him in mind that he was marry'd as well as I: [*Sings.*

For were I the thing call'd a wife,
And my fool grew too fond of his pow'r,
He should look like an ass all his life,
For a prank that I'd play in an hour.

Tol lol la ra tol lol, &c.—Do you observe that, sir?

Mon. I do, and think you wou'd be in the right on't. But, pr'ythee, why dost not give this advice to thy mistress?

Flip. For fear it should go round to your wife, sir; for you know they are play-fellows.

Mon. O, there's no danger of my wife; she knows I'm none of those husbands.

Flip. Are you sure she knows that, sir?

Mon. I'm sure she ought to know it, Flippanta, for really I have but four faults in the world.

Flip. And pray what may they be?

Mon. Why, I'm a little slovenly; I shift but once a week.

Flip. Fough!

Mon. I am sometimes out of humour.

Flip. Provoking!

Mon. I don't give her so much money as she'd have.

Flip. Insolent!

Mon. And a——perhaps I may'nt be quite so young as I was.

Flip. The devil!

Mon. O, but then consider how 'tis on her side, Flippanta. She ruins me with washing, is always out of humour, ever wanting money, and will never be older.

Flip. That last article, I must confess, is a little hard upon you.

Mon. Ah, Flippanta, didst thou but know the daily provocations I have, thou'dst be the first to excuse my faults. But, now I think on't—Thou art none of my friend; thou dost not love me at all; no, not at all.

Flip. And whither is this little reproach going to lead us now?

Mon. You have power over your fair mistress, Flippanta.

Flip. Sir!

Mon. But what then? You hate me.

Flip. I understand you not.

Mon. There's not a moment's trouble her naughty husband gives her, but I feel it too.

Flip. I don't know what you mean.

Mon. If she did but know what part I take in her sufferings——

Flip. Mighty obscure.

Mon. Well, I'll say no more; but——

Flip. All Hebrew.

Mon. If thou wou'dst but tell her on't.

Flip. Still darker and darker.

Mon. I should not be ungrateful.

Flip. Ah, now I begin to understand you.

Mon. Flippanta, there's my purse.

Flip. Say no more; now you explain, indeed ——You are in love?

Mon. Bitterly—and I do swear by all the gods—

Flip. Hold—Spare 'em for another time; you stand in no need of 'em now. A usurer that parts with his purse, gives sufficient proof of his sincerity.

Mon. I hate my wife, Flippanta.

Flip. That we'll take upon your bare word.

Mon. She's the devil, Flippanta.

Flip. You like your neighbour's better.

Mon. Oh! an angel.

Flip. What pity it is the law don't allow trucking!

Mon. If it did, Flippanta!

Flip. But since it don't, sir—keep the reins upon your passion: Don't let your flame rage too high, lest my lady shou'd be cruel, and it should dry you up to a mummy.

Mon. 'Tis impossible she can be so barbarous, to let me die. Alas, Flippanta, a very small matter wou'd save my life.

Flip. Then y'are dead—for we women never grant any thing to a man who will be satisfied with a little.

Mon. Dear Flippanta, that was only my modesty; but since you'll have it out—I am a very dragon; and so your lady'll find—if ever she thinks fit to be——Now I hope you'll stand my friend.

Flip. Well, sir, as far as my credit goes, it shall be employ'd in your service.

Mon. My best Flippanta—tell her—I'm all hers—tell her—my body's hers—tell her—my soul's hers—and tell her—my estate's hers. Lard have mercy upon me, how I'm in love!

Flip. Poor man! what a sweat he's in! But hark—I hear my master: For Heaven's sake compose yourself a little; you are in such a fit, o' my conscience, he'll smell you out.

Mon. Ah dear, I'm in such an emotion, I dare not be seen; put me in this closet for a moment.

Flip. Closet, man! it's too little; your love wou'd stifle you. Go air yourself in the garden a little; you have need on't, i'faith.

[*She puts him out.*

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

A rare adventure, by my troth. This will be curious news to the wives. Fortune has now put their husbands into their hands, and I think they are too sharp to neglect its favours.

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. O, here's the right-hand; the rest of the body can't be far off. Where's my wife, huswife!

Flip. An admirable question!——Why, she's gone abroad, sir.

Gripe. Abroad, abroad? abroad already? Why, she used to be stewing in her bed three hours after this time, as late as 'tis: What makes her gadding so soon?

Flip. Business, I suppose.

Gripe. Business! She has a pretty head for business truly. O ho, let her change her way of living, or I'll make her change a light heart for a heavy one.

Flip. And why would you have her change her way of living, sir! You see it agrees with her. She never look'd better in her life.

Gripe. Don't tell me of her looks; I have done with her looks long since. But I'll make her change her life, or——

Flip. Indeed, sir, you won't.

Gripe. Why, what shall hinder me, insolence?

Flip. That which hinders most husbands—contradiction.

Gripe. Suppose I resolve I won't be contradicted?

Flip. Suppose she resolves you shall?

Gripe. A wife's resolution is not good by law.

Flip. Nor a husband's by custom.

Gripe. I tell thee I will not bear it.

Flip. I tell you, sir, you will bear it.

Gripe. Oons, I have borne it three years already.

Flip. By that you see 'tis but giving your mind to it.

Gripe. My mind to it! Death and the devil! My mind to it!

Flip. Look ye, sir, you may swear and damn, and call the furies to assist you, but till you apply the remedy to the right place, you'll never cure the disease. You fancy you have got an extravagant wife: is't not so?

Gripe. Pr'ythee change me that word fancy, and it is so.

Flip. Why, there's it. Men are strangely troubled with the vapours of late. You'll wonder now, if I tell you, you have the most reasonable wife in town; and that all the disorders you think you see in her, are only here, here, here, in your head. [*Thumping his forehead.*

Gripe. She is then, in thy opinion, a reasonable woman?

Flip. By my faith, I think so.

Gripe. I shall run mad—Name me an extravagance in the world she is not guilty of.

Flip. Name me an extravagance in the world she is guilty of.

Gripe. Come then: Does not she put the whole house in disorder?

Flip. Not that I know of, for she never comes into it but to sleep.

Gripe. 'Tis very well. Does she employ any one moment of her life in the government of her family?

Flip. She is so submissive a wife, she leaves it entirely to you.

Gripe. Admirable! Does she not spend more money in coach-hire and chair-hire, than would maintain six children?

Flip. She's too nice of your credit to be seen daggling in the streets.

Gripe. Good! Do I set eye on her sometimes in a week together?

Flip. That, sir, is because you are never stirring at the same time; you keep odd hours; you are always going to bed when she's rising, and rising just when she's coming to bed.

Gripe. Yes, truly, night into day, and day into night; bawdy-house play, that's her trade; but these are trifles: Has she not lost her diamond necklace? Answer me to that, trapes.

Flip. Yes; and has sent as many tears after it, as if it had been her husband.

Gripe. Ah——the pox take her; but enough. 'Tis resolved, and I will put a stop to the course of her life, or I will put a stop to the course of her blood, and so she shall know, the first time I meet with her; [*Aside;*] which, though we are man and wife, and lie under one roof, 'tis very possible may not be this fortnight. [*Exit* GRIPE.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

Nay, thou hast a blessed time on't, that must be confessed. What a miserable devil is a husband! Insupportable to himself, and a plague to every thing about him. Their wives do by them as children do by dogs—teaze and provoke 'em, 'till they make them so curs'd, they snarl and bite at every thing that comes in their reach. This wretch here is grown perverse to that degree, he's for his wife's keeping at home, and making hell of his house, so he may be the devil in it, to torment her. How niggardly soever he is, of all things he possesses, he is willing to purchase her misery, at the expence of his own peace. But he'd as good be still, for he'll miss of his aim. If I know her, (which I think I do,) she'll set his blood in such a ferment, it shall bubble out at every pore of him; whilst hers is so quiet in her veins, her pulse shall go like a pendulum. [*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Mrs* AMLET'S *House.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. Where's this old woman?——Ahey. What the devil, nobody at home? Ha! her strong box!——And the key in't! 'Tis so. Now fortune be my friend. What the deuce——Not a penny of money in cash!——Nor a 'chequer note!——Nor a bank bill——[*Searching the strong box*]—Nor a crooked stick!—Nor a——mum——here's something——a diamond necklace, by all the gods! Oons! the old woman——zest! [*Claps the necklace in his pocket, then runs and asks her blessing.*

Enter Mrs AMLET.

——Pray, mother, pray to, &c.

Mrs Am. Is it possible?——Dick upon his humble knee! Ah, my dear child!—May Heaven be good unto thee.

Dick. I'm come, my dear mother, to pay my duty to you, and to ask your consent to——

Mrs Am. What a shape is there!

Dick. To ask your consent, I say, to marry a great fortune; for what is riches in this world without a blessing? And how can there be a blessing without respect and duty to parents?

Mrs Am. What a nose he has!

Dick. And therefore it being the duty of every good child not to dispose of himself in marriage without the——

Mrs Am. Now the Lord love thee—[*Kissing him*]—for thou art a goodly young man. Well, Dick——And how goes it with the lady? Are her eyes open to thy charms? Does she see what's for her own good? Is she sensible of the blessings thou hast in store for her? Ha! is all sure? Hast thou broke a piece of money with her? Speak, bird, do: Don't be modest, and hide thy love from thy mother, for I'm an indulgent parent.

Dick. Nothing under heaven can prevent my good fortune, but it's being discover'd I am your son.

Mrs Am. Then thou art still asham'd of thy natural mother—graceless! Why, I'm no whore, sirrah.

Dick. I know you are not——a whore! Bless us all——

Mrs Am. No; my reputation's as good as the best of 'em; and though I'm old, I'm chaste, you rascal you.

Dick. Lord, that is not the thing we talk of, mother; but——

Mrs Am. I think, as the world goes, they may be proud of marrying their daughter into a vartuous family.

Dick. Oons! vartue is not the case.

Mrs Am. Where she may have a good example before her eyes.

Dick. O Lord! O Lord! O Lord!

Mrs Am. I'm a woman that don't so much as encourage an incontinent look towards me.

Dick. I tell you, 'sdeath! I tell you——

Mrs Am. If a man shou'd make an uncivil motion to me, I'd spit in his lascivious face: and all this you may tell them, sirrah.

Dick. Death and furies! the woman's out of her——

Mrs Am. Don't you swear, you rascal you, don't you swear; we shall have you damn'd at last, and then I shall be disgrac'd.

Dick. Why then, in cold blood hear me speak to you: I tell you it's a city-fortune I'm about; she cares not a fig for your virtue; she'll hear of nothing but quality: she has quarrell'd with one of her friends for having a better complexion, and is resolved she'll marry, to take place of her.

Mrs Am. What a cherry lip is there!

Dick. Therefore, good dear mother, now have a care, and don't discover me; for if you do, all's lost.

Mrs Am. Dear, dear, how thy fair bride will be delighted. Go, get thee gone, go: go fetch her home, go fetch her home; I'll give her a sack-posset, and a pillow of down she shall lay her head upon. Go fetch her home, I say.

Dick. Take care then of the main chance, my dear mother: remember, if you discover me——

Mrs Am. Go fetch her home, I say.

Dick. You promise me then——

Mrs Am. March.

Dick. But swear to me——

Mrs Am. Be gone, sirrah.

Dick. Well, I'll reply upon you——But one kiss before I go. [*Kisses her heartily, and runs off.*

Mrs Am. Now the Lord love thee; for thou art a comfortable young man. [*Exit Mrs* AMLET.

SCENE II.—GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter CORINNA *and* FLIPPANTA.

Cor. But hark you, Flippanta, if you don't think he loves me dearly, don't give him my letter, after all.

Flip. Let me alone.

Cor. When he has read it, let him give it you again.

Flip. Don't trouble yourself.

Cor. And not a word of the pudding to my mother-in-law.

Flip. Enough.

Cor. When we come to love one another to the purpose, she shall know all.

Flip. Ay, then 'twill be time enough.

Cor. But remember 'tis you make me do all this now; so if any mischief comes on't, 'tis you must answer for't.

Flip. I'll be your security.

Cor. I'm young, and know nothing of the matter; but you have experience; so it's your business to conduct me safe.

Flip. Poor innocence!

Cor. But tell me, in serious sadness, Flippanta, does he love me with the very soul of him?

Flip. I have told you so an hundred times, and yet you are not satisfied.

Cor. But, methinks, I'd fain have him tell me so himself.

Flip. Have patience, and it shall be done.

Cor. Why, patience is a virtue; that we must all confess——But I fancy, the sooner it's done the better, Flippanta.

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jess. Madam, yonder's your geography-master waiting for you. [*Exit.*

Cor. Ah! how I am tired with these old fumbling fellows, Flippanta.

Flip. Well, don't let them break your heart; you shall be rid of them all ere long.

Cor. Nay, 'tis not the study I'm so weary of, Flippanta; 'tis the odious thing that teaches me. Were the colonel my master, I fancy I could take pleasure in learning every thing he could shew me.

Flip. And he can shew you a great deal, I can tell you that. But get you gone in; here's somebody coming; we must not be seen together.

Cor. I will, I will, I will——O, the dear colonel. [*Running off.*

Enter Mrs AMLET.

Flip. O ho, it's Mrs Amlet——What brings you so soon to us again, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. Ah! my dear Mrs Flippanta, I'm in a furious fright.

Flip. Why, what's come to you?

Mrs Am. Ah! Mercy on us all——Madam's diamond necklace——

Flip. What of that?

Mrs Am. Are you sure you left it at my house?

Flip. Sure I left it! A very pretty question, truly.

Mrs Am. Nay, don't be angry: say nothing to madam of it, I beseech you: It will be found again, if it be Heaven's good will. At least, 'tis I must bear the loss on't. 'Tis my rogue of a son has laid his birdlime fingers on't.

Flip. Your son, Mrs Amlet! Do you breed your children up to such tricks as these then?

Mrs Am. What shall I say to you, Mrs Flippanta? Can I help it? He has been a rogue from his cradle, Dick has. But he has his deserts too. And now it comes in my head, mayhap he may have no ill design in this neither.

Flip. No ill design, woman! He's a pretty fellow if he can steal a diamond necklace with a good one.

Mrs Am. You don't know him, Mrs Flippanta, so well as I that bore him. Dick's a rogue, 'tis true, but——mum——

Flip. What does the woman mean?

Mrs Am. Hark you, Mrs Flippanta; is not here a young gentlewoman in your house that wants a husband?

Flip. Why do you ask?

Mrs Am. By way of conversation only; it does not concern me; but when she marries, I may chance to dance at the wedding. Remember I tell you so; I who am but Mrs Amlet.

Flip. You dance at her wedding! you!

Mrs Am. Yes, I, I; but don't trouble madam about her necklace; perhaps it mayn't go out of the family. Adieu, Mrs Flippanta.

[*Exit Mrs* AMLET.

Flip. What——what——what does the woman mean? Mad! What a hodge-podge of a story's here? The necklace lost; and her son Dick; and a fortune to marry; and she shall dance at the wedding; and——She does not intend, I hope, to propose a match between her son Dick and Corinna! By my conscience I believe she does. An old beldam!

Enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, hussy, how stand our affairs? Has miss writ us an answer yet? My master's very impatient yonder.

Flip. And why the deuce does not he come himself? What does he send such idle fellows as thee of his errands? Here I had her alone just now: He won't have such an opportunity again this month, I can tell him that.

Brass. So much the worse for him; 'tis his business——But now, my dear, let thee and I talk a little of our own: I grow most damnably in love with thee; dost hear that.

Flip. Phu! thou art always timing things wrong: my head is full at present of more important things than love.

Brass. Then it's full of important things indeed. Dost want a privy-counsellor?

Flip. I want an assistant.

Brass. To do what?

Flip. Mischief.

Brass. I'm thy man—touch.

Flip. But before I venture to let thee into my project, pr'ythee tell me whether thou find'st a natural disposition to ruin a husband to oblige his wife.

Brass. Is she handsome?

Flip. Yes.

Brass. Why then, my disposition's at her service.

Flip. She's beholden to thee.

Brass. Not she alone neither; therefore don't let her grow vain upon't; for I have three or four affairs of that kind going at this time.

Flip. Well, go carry this epistle from miss to thy master; and when thou com'st back, I'll tell thee thy business.

Brass. I'll know it before I go, if you please.

Flip. Thy master waits for an answer.

Brass. I'd rather he shou'd wait than I.

Flip. Why then, in short, Araminta's husband is in love with my lady.

Brass. Very well, child, we have a Rowland for her Oliver: Thy lady's husband is in love with Araminta.

Flip. Who told you that, sirrah?

Brass. 'Tis a negociation I am charged with, pert. Did not I tell thee I did business for half the town? I have managed Master Gripe's little affairs for him these ten years, you slut you.

Flip. Hark thee, Brass; the game's in our hands, if we can but play the cards.

Brass. Pique and repique, you jade you, if the wives will fall into a good intelligence.

Flip. Let them alone; I'll answer for them they don't slip the occasion.—See, here they come. They little think what a piece of good news we have for 'em.

Enter CLARISSA *and* ARAMINTA.

Clar. Jessamin! here, boy, carry up these things into my dressing-room, and break as many of them by the way as you can, be sure.——O! art thou there, Brass! What news?

Brass. Madam, I only called in as I was going by—But some little propositions Mrs Flippanta has been starting have kept me here to offer your ladyship my humble service.

Clar. What propositions?

Brass. She'll acquaint you, madam.

Aram. Is there any thing new, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, and pretty too.

Clar. That follows of course; but let's have it quick.

Flip. Why, madam, you have made a conquest.

Clar. Hussy——But of who? Quick.

Flip. Of Mr Moneytrap, that's all.

Aram. My husband?

Flip. Yes, your husband, madam: you thought fit to corrupt ours, so now we are even with you.

Aram. Sure thou art in jest, Flippanta.

Flip. Serious as my devotions.

Brass. And the cross intrigue, ladies, is what our brains have been at work about.

Aram. My dear! [*To* CLARISSA.

Clar. My life!

Aram. My angel!

Clar. My soul! [*Hugging one another.*

Aram. The stars have done this.

Clar. The pretty little twinklers!

Flip. And what will you do for them now?

Clar. What grateful creatures ought—shew 'em we don't despise their favours.

Aram. But is not this a wager between these two blockheads?

Clar. I would not give a shilling to go the winner's halves.

Aram. Then 'tis the most fortunate thing that ever cou'd have happened.

Clar. All your last night's ideas, Araminta, were trifles to it.

Aram. Brass, my dear, will be useful to us.

Brass. At your service, madam.

Clar. Flippanta will be necessary, my life!

Flip. She waits your commands, madam.

Aram. For my part, then, I recommend my husband to thee, Flippanta, and make it my earnest request thou won't leave him one half-crown.

Flip. I'll do all I can to obey you, madam.

Brass. [*To* CLARISSA.] If your ladyship wou'd give me the same kind orders for yours.

Clar. O———If thou sparest him, Brass, I'm thy enemy till I die.

Brass. 'Tis enough, madam: I'll be sure to give you a reasonable account of him. But how do you intend we shall proceed, ladies? Must we storm the purse at once, or break ground in form, and carry it by little and little?

Clar. Storm, dear Brass, storm: ever, whilst you live, storm.

Aram. O, by all means: Must it not be so, Flippanta?

Flip. In four-and-twenty hours, two hundred pounds a-piece: that's my sentence.

Brass. Very well. But, ladies, you'll give me leave to put you in mind of some little expence in favours, 'twill be necessary you are at, to these honest gentlemen.

Aram. Favours, Brass!

Brass. Um——a——some small matters, madam, I doubt must be.

Clar. Now that's a vile article, Araminta; for that thing your husband is so like mine——

Flip. Phu! there's a scruple indeed. Pray, madam, don't be so squeamish: though the meat be a little flat, we'll find you savoury sauce to it.

Clar. This wench is so mad.

Flip. Why, what in the name of Lucifer is it you have to do, that's so terrible?

Brass. A civil look only.

Aram. There's no great harm in that.

Flip. An obliging word.

Clar. That one may afford 'em.

Brass. A little smile, à propos.

Aram. That's but giving one's self an air.

Flip. Receive a little letter, perhaps.

Clar. Women of quality do that from fifty odious fellows.

Brass. Suffer, may be, a squeeze by the hand.

Aram. One's so used to that, one does not feel it.

Flip. Or if a kiss would do't?

Clar. I'd die first.

Brass. Indeed, ladies, I doubt 'twill be necessary to—

Clar. Get their wretched money without paying so dear for it.

Flip. Well, just as you please for that, my ladies: But I suppose you'll play upon the square with your favours, and not pique yourselves upon being one more grateful than another.

Brass. And state a fair account of receipts and disbursements.

Aram. That I think should be, indeed.

Clar. With all my heart, and Brass shall be our book-keeper. So get thee to work, man, as fast as thou canst: but not a word of all this to thy master.

Brass. I'll observe my orders, madam.

[*Exit* BRASS.

Clar. I'll have the pleasure of telling the colonel myself; he'll be violently delighted with it; 'tis the best man in the world, Araminta; he'll bring us rare company to-morrow—all sorts of gamesters; and thou shalt see my husband will be such a beast to be out of humour at it.

Aram. The monster—But hush, here's my dear approaching; pr'ythee let's leave him to Flippanta.

Flip. Ah, pray do; I'll bring you a good account of him, I'll warrant you.

Clar. Dispatch then, for the basset-table's in haste. [*Exeunt* CLAR. *and* ARAM.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

So, now have at him: here he comes: we'll try if we can pillage the usurer, as he does other folks.

Enter MONEYTRAP.

Mon. Well, my pretty Flippanta, is thy mistress come home?

Flip. Yes, sir.

Mon. And where is she, pr'ythee?

Flip. Gone abroad, sir.

Mon. How dost mean?

Flip. I mean right, sir: My lady will come home and go abroad ten times in an hour, when she's either in very good humour, or very bad.

Mon. Good-lack! But I'll warrant, in general, 'tis her naughty husband that makes her house uneasy to her. But hast thou said a little something to her, chicken, for an expiring lover? ha?

Flip. Said—yes, I have said, much good may do me.

Mon. Well! and how?

Flip. And how!—And how do you think you wou'd have me do't? And you have such a way with you, one can refuse you nothing. But I have brought myself into a fine business by it.

Mon. Good lack!—But I hope, Flippanta—

Flip. Yes, your hopes will do much, when I am turned out of doors.

Mon. Was she then terrible angry?

Flip. Oh! had you seen how she flew, when she saw where I was pointing; for you must know I went round the bush, and round the bush, before I came to the matter.

Mon. Nay, 'tis a ticklish point, that must be owned.

Flip. On my word is it—I mean where a lady's truly virtuous; for that's our case, you must know.

Mon. A very dangerous case indeed.

Flip. But I can tell you one thing—she has an inclination to you.

Mon. Is it possible?

Flip. Yes, and I told her so at last.

Mon. Well, and what did she answer thee?

Flip. Slap——and bid me bring it you for a token. [*Giving him a slap on the face.*

Mon. And you have lost none on't by the way, with a pox t'ye. [*Aside.*

Flip. Now this, I think, looks the best in the world.

Mon. Yes, but really it feels a little oddly.

Flip. Why, you must know, ladies have different ways of expressing their kindness, according to the humour they are in: If she had been in a good one, it had been a kiss; but as long as she sent you something, your affairs go well.

Mon. Why, truly, I am a little ignorant in the mysterious paths of love, so I must be guided by thee. But, pr'ythee, take her in a good humour next token she sends me.

Flip. Ah! good humour?

Mon. What's the matter?

Flip. Poor lady!

Mon. Ha?

Flip. If I durst tell you all——

Mon. What then?

Flip. You wou'd not expect to see her in one a good while.

Mon. Why, I pray?

Flip. I must own I did take an unseasonable time to talk of love matters to her.

Mon. Why, what's the matter?

Flip. Nothing.

Mon. Nay, pr'ythee tell me.

Flip. I dare not.

Mon. You must indeed.

Flip. Why, when women are in difficulties, how can they think of pleasure?

Mon. Why, what difficulties can she be in?

Flip. Nay, I do but guess, after all; for she has that grandeur of soul, she'd die before she'd tell.

Mon. But what dost thou suspect?

Flip. Why, what should one suspect, where a husband loves nothing but getting of money, and a wife nothing but spending on't.

Mon. So she wants that same then?

Flip. I say no such thing; I know nothing of the matter: pray make no wrong interpretation of what I say: my lady wants nothing that I know of. 'Tis true—she has had ill luck at cards of late; I believe she has not won once this month; but what of that?

Mon. Ha!

Flip. 'Tis true, I know her spirit's such, she'd see her husband hanged, before she'd ask him for a farthing.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. And then I know him again: he'd see her drowned before he'd give her a farthing; but that's a help to your affair, you know.

Mon. 'Tis so indeed.

Flip. Ah—well, I'll say nothing; but if she had none of these things to fret her——

Mon. Why, really, Flippanta——

Flip. I know what you are going to say now: You are going to offer your service, but 'twon't do; you have a mind to play the gallant now, but it must not be; you want to be shewing your liberality, but 'twon't be allowed; you'll be pressing me to offer it, and she'll be in a rage. We shall have the devil to do.

Mon. You mistake me, Flippanta; I was only going to say—

Flip. Ay, I know what you are going to say well enough; but I tell you it will never do so. If one could find out some way now—ay, let me see——

Mon. Indeed I hope——

Flip. Pray be quiet—no—but I'm thinking—hum—she'll smoke that though—let us consider—If one could find a way to—'Tis the nicest point in the world to bring about: she'll never touch it, if she knows from whence it comes.

Mon. Shall I try if I can reason her husband out of twenty pounds, to make her easy the rest of her life?

Flip. Twenty pounds, man!—Why, you shall see her set that upon a card. O—she has a great soul—Besides, if her husband should oblige her, it might in time take off her aversion to him, and by consequence her inclination to you. No, no, it must never come that way.

Mon. What shall we do then?

Flip. Hold still—I have it. I'll tell you what you shall do.

Mon. Ay.

Flip. You shall make her—a restitution—of two hundred pounds.

Mon. Ha!—a restitution!

Flip. Yes, yes; 'tis the luckiest thought in the world. Madam often plays, you know, and folks who do so, meet now and then with sharpers. Now you shall be a sharper.

Mon. A sharper!

Flip. Ay, ay, a sharper; and having cheated her of two hundred pounds, shall be troubled in mind, and send it her back again. You comprehend me?

Mon. Yes, I—I comprehend, but a—won't she suspect if it be so much?

Flip. No, no; the more the better.

Mon. Two hundred pounds!

Flip. Yes, two hundred pounds—Or, let me see—so even a sum may look a little suspicious—ay—let it be two hundred and thirty; that odd thirty will make it look so natural, the devil won't find it out.

Mon. Ha!

Flip. Pounds, too, look I don't know how; guineas, I fancy, were better—ay, guineas; it shall be guineas. You are of that mind, are you not?

Mon. Um—a guinea, you know, Flippanta, is—

Flip. A thousand times genteeler. You are certainly in the right on't; it shall be, as you say, two hundred and thirty guineas.

Mon. Ho—well, if it must be guineas, let's see—two hundred guineas!

Flip. And thirty; two hundred and thirty: If you mistake the sum, you spoil all. So go put them in a purse while it's fresh in your head, and send 'em to me with a penitential letter, desiring I'll do you the favour to restore them to her.

Mon. Two hundred and thirty pounds in a bag!

Flip. Guineas, I say, guineas.

Mon. Ay, guineas, that's true. But, Flippanta, if she don't know they come from me, then I give my money for nothing, you know.

Flip. Phu! leave that to me; I'll manage the stock for you; I'll make it produce something, I'll warrant you.

Mon. Well, Flippanta, 'tis a great sum indeed; but I'll go try what I can do for her. You say two hundred guineas in a purse?

Flip. And thirty; if the man's in his senses.

Mon. And thirty, 'tis true: I always forget that thirty. [*Exit* MONEYTRAP.

Flip. So, get thee gone: thou art a rare fellow, i'faith!—Brass! it's thee, is't not?

Enter BRASS.

Brass. It is, huswife. How go matters? I staid till thy gentleman was gone. Hast done any thing towards our common purse?

Flip. I think I have: he's going to make us a restitution of two or three hundred pounds.

Brass. A restitution!—Good.

Flip. A new way, sirrah, to make a lady take a present without putting her to the blush.

Brass. 'Tis very well; mighty well indeed. Pr'ythee where's thy master? Let me try if I can persuade him to be troubled in mind too.

Flip. Not so hasty: He's gone into his closet to prepare himself for a quarrel I have advised him to—with his wife.

Brass. What to do?

Flip. Why, to make her stay at home, now she has resolved to do it before-hand. You must know, sirrah, we intend to make a merit of our basset table, and get a good pretence for the merry companions we intend to fill his house with.

Brass. Very nicely spun, truly: thy husband will be a happy man.

Flip. Hold your tongue, you fool you. See, here comes your master.

Brass. He's welcome.

Enter DICK.

Dick. My dear Flippanta! how many thanks have I to pay thee!

Flip. Do you like her style?

Dick. The kindest little rogue! There's nothing but she gives me leave to hope. I am the happiest man the world has in its care.

Flip. Not so happy as you think for neither, perhaps: You have a rival, sir, I can tell you that.

Dick. A rival!

Flip. Yes, and a dangerous one too.

Dick. Who, in the name of terror?

Flip. A devilish fellow, one Mr Amlet.

Dick. Amlet! I know no such man.

Flip. You know the man's mother though: you met her here, and are in her favour, I can tell you. If he worst you in your mistress, you shall e'en marry her, and disinherit him.

Dick. If I have no other rival but Mr Amlet, I believe I sha'n't be much disturbed in my amour. But cann't I see Corinna?

Flip. I don't know: she has always some of her masters with her; but I'll go see if she can spare you a moment, and bring you word.

[*Exit* FLIPPANTA.

Dick. I wish my old hobbling mother ha'n't been blabbing something here she should not do.

Brass. Fear nothing; all's safe on that side yet. But how speaks young mistress's epistle? Soft and tender?

Dick. As pen can write.

Brass. So you think all goes well there?

Dick. As my heart can wish.

Brass. You are sure on't?

Dick. Sure on't.

Brass. Why then, ceremony aside, [*Putting on his hat,*] you and I must have a little talk, Mr Amlet.

Dick. Ah, Brass, what art thou going to do? Will't ruin me?

Brass. Look you, Dick, few words. You are in a smooth way of making your fortune: I hope all will roll on. But how do you intend matters shall pass 'twixt you and me in this business?

Dick. Death and furies! what a time dost take to talk on't.

Brass. Good words, or I betray you: they have already heard of one Mr Amlet in the house.

Dick. Here's a son of a whore! [*Aside.*

Brass. In short, look smooth, and be a good prince. I am your valet, 'tis true; your footman sometimes, which I'm enraged at; but you have always had the ascendant, I confess. When we were school-fellows, you made me carry your books, make your exercise, own your rogueries, and sometimes take a whipping for you. When we were fellow-prentices, though I was your senior, you made me open the shop, clean my master's shoes, cut last at dinner, and eat all the crust. In our sins, too, I must own you still kept me under: you soared up to adultery with our mistress, while I was at humble fornication with the maid. Nay, in our punishments you still made good your post; for when, once upon a time, I was sentenced but to be whipped, I cannot deny but you were condemned to be hanged. So that, in all times, I must confess your inclinations have been greater and nobler than mine; however, I cannot consent that you should at once fix your fortune for life, and I dwell in my humilities for the rest of my days.

Dick. Hark thee, Brass; if I do not most nobly by thee, I'm a dog.

Brass. And when?

Dick. As soon as ever I am married.

Brass. Ah, the pox take thee.

Dick. Then you mistrust me?

Brass. I do, by my faith. Look you, sir, some folks we mistrust, because we don't know them; others we mistrust, because we do know them; and for one of these reasons, I desire there may be a bargain before-hand; if not, [*Raising his voice,*] look ye, Dick Amlet——

Dick. Soft, my dear friend and companion. The dog will ruin me. [*Aside.*] Say what is't will content thee?

Brass. O ho!

Dick. But how canst thou be such a barbarian?

Brass. I learnt it at Algier.

Dick. Come, make thy Turkish demand then.

Brass. You know you gave me a bank-bill this morning to receive for you.

Dick. I did so, of fifty pounds: 'tis thine. So, now thou art satisfied, all's fixed.

Brass. It is not indeed. There's a diamond necklace you robbed your mother of even now.

Dick. Ah, you Jew!

Brass. No words.

Dick. My dear Brass!

Brass. I insist.

Dick. My old friend!

Brass. Dick Amlet, [*Raising his voice,*] I insist.

Dick. Ah, the cormorant!——Well, 'tis thine; but thou'lt never thrive with it.

Brass. When I find it begins to do me mischief, I'll give it you again. But I must have a wedding-suit.

Dick. Well?

Brass. Some good lace.

Dick. Thou sha't.

Brass. A stock of linen.

Dick. Enough.

Brass. Not yet——a silver sword.

Dick. Well, thou shalt have that too. Now thou hast every thing.

Brass. Gad forgive me, I forgot a ring of remembrance: I would not forget all these favours for the world: a sparkling diamond will be always playing in my eye, and put me in mind of them.

Dick. This unconscionable rogue! [*Aside.*] Well, I'll bespeak one for thee.

Brass. Brilliant.

Dick. It shall. But if the thing don't succeed after all——

Brass. I'm a man of honour, and restore. And so the treaty being finished, I strike my flag of defiance, and fall into my respects again.

[*Taking off his hat.*

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. I have made you wait a little, but I could not help it: her geography-master is but just gone. He has been shewing her Prince Eugene's march into Italy.

Dick. Pr'ythee let me come to her; I'll shew her a part of the world he has never shewn her yet.

Flip. So I told her, you must know; and she said she could like to travel in good company: so if you'll slip up those back-stairs, you shall try if you can agree upon the journey.

Dick. My dear Flippanta!

Flip. None of your dear acknowledgments, I beseech you, but up stairs as hard as you can drive.

Dick. I'm gone. [*Exit* DICK.

Flip. And do you follow him, Jack-a-dandy, and see he is not surprised.

Brass. I thought that was your post, Mrs Use-

ful; but if you'll come and keep me in humour, I don't care if I share the duty with you.

Flip. No words, sirrah, but follow him; I have somewhat else to do.

Brass. The jade's so absolute, there's no contesting with her. One kiss though, to keep the centinel warm. [*Gives her a long kiss.*]——So.

[*Exit* BRASS.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

——— A nasty rogue. [*Wiping her mouth.*] But let me see, what have I to do now? This restitution will be here quickly, I suppose; in the mean time I'll go know if my lady's ready for the quarrel yet. Master, yonder, is so full on't, he's ready to burst; but we'll give him vent by and by, with a witness. [*Exit* FLIP.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter CORINNA, DICK, *and* BRASS.

Brass. Don't fear; I'll give you timely notice. [*Goes to the door.*

Dick. Come, you must consent, you shall consent. How can you leave me thus upon the rack? A man who loves you to that excess that I do.

Cor. Nay, that you love me, sir, that I'm satisfied in, for you have sworn you do; and I'm so pleased with it, I'd fain have you do so as long as you live; so we must never marry.

Dick. Not marry, my dear! Why, what's our love good for if we don't marry?

Cor. Ah——I'm afraid 'twill be good for little if we do.

Dick. Why do you think so?

Cor. Because I hear my father and mother, and my uncle and aunt, and Araminta and her husband, and twenty other married folks, say so from morning to night.

Dick. Oh, that's because they are bad husbands and bad wives; but, in our case, there will be a good husband and a good wife, and so we shall love for ever.

Cor. Why, there may be something in that, truly; and I'm always willing to hear reason, as a reasonable young woman ought to do. But are you sure, sir, though we are very good now, we shall be so when we come to be better acquainted?

Dick. I can answer for myself, at least.

Cor. I wish you could answer for me too. You see I am a plain dealer, sir; I hope you don't like me the worse for it.

Dick. O, by no means; 'tis a sign of admirable morals; and I hope, since you practise it yourself, you'll approve of it in your lover. In one word, therefore, (for 'tis in vain to mince the matter,) my resolution's fixed, and the world cann't stagger me. I marry——or I die.

Cor. Indeed, sir, I have much ado to believe you; the disease of love is seldom so violent.

Dick. Madam, I have two diseases to end my miseries; if the first don't do it, the latter shall: [*Drawing his sword.*] One's in my heart, t'other's in my scabbard.

Cor. Not for a diadem. [*Catching hold of him.*] Ah, put it up, put it up.

Dick. How absolute is your command. [*Dropping his sword.*] A word, you see, disarms me.

Cor. What a power I have over him! [*Aside.*] The wondrous deeds of love!——Pray, sir, let me have no more of these rash doings though; perhaps I mayn't be always in the saving humour.——I'm sure if I had let him stick himself, I should have been envied by all the great ladies in the town. [*Aside.*

Dick. Well, madam, have I then your promise? You'll make me the happiest of mankind.

Cor. I don't know what to say to you; but I believe I had as good promise, for I find I shall certainly do it.

Dick. Then let us seal the contract thus. [*Kisses her.*

Cor. Um——he has almost taken away my breath: he kisses purely. [*Aside.*

Dick. Hark!——somebody comes.

[BRASS *peeping in.*

Brass. Gar! there's the enemy——no; hold; y'are safe; 'tis Flippanta.

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. Come, have you agreed the matter?—If not, you must end it another time, for your father's in motion, so pray kiss and part.

Cor. That's sweet and sour. [*They kiss.*] Adieu t'ye, sir. [*Exeunt* DICK *and* COR.

Enter CLARISSA.

Clar. Have you told him I'm at home, Flippanta?

Flip. Yes, madam.

Clar. And that I'll see him?

Flip. Yes, that too: but here's news for you—I have just now received the restitution.

Clar. That's killing pleasure. And how much has he restored me?

Flip. Two hundred and thirty guineas.

Clar. Wretched rogue! But retreat; your master's coming to quarrel.

Flip. I'll be within call, if things run high.

[*Exit* FLIP.

Enter GRIPE.

Gripe. O ho!——are you there? i'faith, madam, your humble servant: I'm very glad to see you at home: I thought I should never have had that honour again.

Clar. Good morrow, my dear: how d'ye do? Flippanta says you are out of humour, and that you have a mind to quarrel with me: Is it true? ha?——I have a terrible pain in my head; I give you notice on't before-hand.

Gripe. And how the pox should it be otherwise? It's a wonder you are not dead—as a' would you were—[*Aside*]—with the life you lead. Are you not ashamed? And do you not blush to——

Clar. My dear child, you crack my brain; soften the harshness of your voice; say what thou would, but let it be in an agreeable tone.

Gripe. Tone, madam! Don't tell me of a tone.

Clar. O, if you will quarrel, do it with temperance; let it be all in cool blood, even and smooth, as if you were not moved with what you said; and then I'll hear you as if I were not moved with it neither.

Gripe. Had ever man such need of patience? Madam, madam, I must tell you, madam——

Clar. Another key, or I'll walk off.

Gripe. Don't provoke me.

Clar. Shall you be long, my dear, in your remonsfrances?

Gripe. Yes, madam, and very long.

Clar. If you would quarrel *en abrêgé*, I should have a world of obligation to you.

Gripe. What I have to say, forsooth, is not to be expressed *en abrêgé*; my complaints are too numerous.

Clar. Complaints! Of what, my dear? Have I ever given you subject of complaint, my life?

Gripe. O, pox! My dear and my life! I desire none of your *tendres*.

Clar. How! find fault with my kindness, and my expressions of affection and respect? The world will guess by this what the rest of your complaints may be. I must tell you, I am scandalized at your procedure.

Gripe. I must tell you, I am running mad with yours.

Clar. Ah! how insupportable are the humours of some husbands; so full of fancies, and so ungovernable! What have you in the world to disturb you?

Gripe. What have I to disturb me! I have you,—death, and the devil!

Clar. Ah, merciful Heaven! how he swears! You should never accustom yourself to such words as these; indeed, my dear, you should not; your mouth's always full of them.

Gripe. Blood and thunder! madam——

Clar. Ah, he'll fetch the house down. Do you know you make me tremble for you? Flippanta! Who's there? Flippanta!

Gripe. Here's a provoking devil for you!

Enter FLIPPANTA.

Flip. What, in the name of Jove, is the matter? You will raise the neighbourhood.

Clar. Why, here's your master in a most violent fuss, and no mortal soul can tell for what.

Gripe. Not tell for what!

Clar. No, my life. I have begged him to tell me his griefs, Flippanta; and then he swears: good Lord! how he does swear.

Gripe. Ah! you wicked jade! Ah, you wicked jade!

Clar. Do you hear him, Flippanta! do you hear him!

Flip. Pray, sir, let's know a little what puts you in all this fury?

Clar. Pr'ythee stand near me, Flippanta: there's an odd froth about his mouth, looks as if his poor head were going wrong: I'm afraid he'll bite.

Gripe. The wicked woman, Flippanta; the wicked woman.

Clar. Can any body wonder I shun my own house, when he treats me at this rate in it?

Gripe. At this rate! Why, in the devil's name——

Clar. Do you hear him again?

Flip. Come, a little moderation, sir, and try what that will produce.

Gripe. Hang her, 'tis all a pretence to justify her going abroad.

Clar. A pretence! a pretence! Do you hear how black a charge he loads me with? Charges me with a pretence! Is this the return for all my downright open actions? You know, my dear, I scorn pretences: Whenever I go abroad, it is without pretence.

Gripe. Give me patience!

Flip. You have a great deal, sir.

Clar. And yet he's never content, Flippanta.

Gripe. What shall I do?

Clar. What a reasonable man would do—own yourself in the wrong, and be quiet. Here's Flippanta has understanding, and I have moderation; I am willing to make her judge of our differences.

Flip. You do me a great deal of honour, madam; but I tell you before-hand, I shall be a little on master's side.

Gripe. Right. Flippanta has sense. Come, let her decide. Have I not reason to be in a passion? tell me that.

Clar. You must tell her for what, my life.

Gripe. Why, for the trade you drive, my soul.

Flip. Look you, sir; pray take things right. I know madam does fret you a little now and then, that's true; but, in the main, she is the softest, sweetest, genteelest lady breathing: let her but live entirely to her own fancy, and she'll never say a word to you from morning to night.

Gripe. Oons! let her but stay at home, and she shall do what she will: in reason, that is.

Flip. D'ye hear that, madam? Nay, now I must be on master's side: you see how he loves you; he desires only your company: pray give him that satisfaction, or I must pronounce against you.

Clar. Well, I agree. Thou know'st I don't love to grieve him: let him be always in good humour, and I'll be always at home.

Flip. Look you there, sir; what would you have more?

Gripe. Well, let her keep her word, and I'll have done quarrelling.

Clar. I must not, however, so far lose the merit of my consent, as to let you think I'm weary of going abroad, my dear: What I do is purely to oblige you; which, that I may be able to perform without a relapse, I'll invent what ways I can, to make my prison supportable to me.

Flip. Her prison! pretty bird! her prison! Don't that word melt you, sir?

Gripe. I must confess I did not expect to find her so reasonable.

Flip. O, sir, soon or late wives come into good humour: husbands must only have a little patience to wait for it.

Clar. The innocent little diversions, dear, that I shall content myself with, will be chiefly play and company.

Gripe. O, I'll find you employment; your time sha'n't lie upon your hands; tho', if you have a mind now for such a companion as a——let me see——Araminta, for example; why, I sha'n't be against her being with you from morning till night.

Clar. You cann't oblige me more: 'tis the best woman in the world.

Gripe. Is not she?

Flip. Ah, the old satyr! [*Aside.*

Gripe. Then we'll have, besides her, may be sometimes——her husband; and we shall see my niece that writes verses, and my sister Fidget; with her husband's brother, that's always merry; and his little cousin, that's to marry the fat curate; and my uncle the apothecary, with his wife and all his children. O, we shall divert ourselves rarely.

Flip. Good. [*Aside.*

Clar. O, for that, my dear child, I must be plain with you: I'll see none of 'em but Araminta, who has the manners of the court; for I'll converse with none but women of quality.

Gripe. Ay, ay, they shall all have one quality or other.

Clar. Then, my dear, to make our home pleasant, we'll have concerts of music sometimes.

Gripe. Music in my house!

Clar. Yes, my child; we must have music, or the house will be so dull, I shall get the spleen, and be going abroad again.

Flip. Nay, she has so much complaisance for you, sir, you cann't dispute such things with her.

Gripe. Ay, but if I have music——

Clar. Ay, but, sir, I must have music.

Flip. Not every day, madam don't mean.

Clar. No, bless me, no; but three concerts a-week: three days more we'll play, after dinner, at ombre, piquet, basset, and so forth, and close the evening with a handsome supper and a ball.

Gripe. A ball!

Clar. Then, my love, you know there is but one day more upon our hands, and that shall be the day of conversation: we'll read verses, talk of books, invent modes, tell lies, scandalize our friends, be pert upon religion; and, in short, employ every moment of it in some pretty witty exercise or other.

Flip. What order you see 'tis she proposes to live in! A most wonderful regularity!

Gripe. Regularity, with a pox! [*Aside.*

Clar. And as this kind of life, so soft, so smooth, so agreeable, must needs invite a vast deal of company to partake of it, 'twill be necessary to have the decency of a porter at our door, you know.

Gripe. A porter!——A scrivener have a porter, madam!

Clar. Positively, a porter.

Gripe. Why, no scrivener since Adam ever had a porter, woman!

Clar. You will therefore be renowned in story, for having the first, my life.

Gripe. Flippanta.

Flip. Hang it, sir, never dispute a trifle: if you vex her, perhaps she'll insist upon a Swiss. [*Aside to* GRIPE.

Gripe. But, madam——

Clar. But, sir, a porter; positively a porter: without that, the treaty's null, and I go abroad this moment.

Flip. Come, sir; never lose so advantageous a peace for a pitiful porter.

Gripe. Why, I shall be hooted at; the boys will throw stones at my porter. Besides, where shall I have money for all this expence?

Clar. My dear, who asks you for any? Don't be in a fright, chicken.

Gripe. Don't be in a fright, madam! But where, I say—

Flip. Madam plays, sir; think on that: women that play have inexhaustible mines; and wives who receive least money from their husbands are many times those who spend the most.

Clar. So, my dear, let what Flippanta says content you. Go, my life; trouble yourself with nothing, but let me do just as I please, and all will be well: I'm going into my closet, to consider of some more things to enable me to give you the pleasure of my company at home, without making it too great a misery to a yielding wife. [*Exit* CLARISSA.

Flip. Mirror of goodness! Pattern to all wives! Well, sure, sir, you are the happiest of all husbands.

Gripe. Yes—and a miserable dog for all that too, perhaps.

Flip. Why, what can you ask more than this matchless complaisance?

Gripe. I don't know what I can ask, and yet I'm not satisfied with what I have neither; the devil mixes in it all, I think; complaisant or perverse, it feels just as it did.

Flip. Why then, your uneasiness is only a disease, sir; perhaps a little bleeding and purging would relieve you.

Clar. Flippanta! [CLARISSA *calls within.*

Flip. Madam calls. I come, madam. Come, be merry, be merry, sir; you have cause, take my word for't. Poor devil! [*Aside.*] [*Exit* FLIPPANTA.

Gripe. I don't know that, I don't know that: But this I do know, that an honest man who

has married a jade, whether she's pleased to spend her time at home or abroad, had better have lived a bachelor.

Enter BRASS.

Brass. O, sir, I'm mighty glad I have found you.

Gripe. Why, what's the matter, pr'ythee?

Brass. Can nobody hear us?

Gripe. No, no; speak quickly.

Brass. You ha'n't seen Araminta since the last letter I carry'd her from you?

Gripe. Not I: I go prudently; I don't press things like your young firebrand lovers.

Brass. But, seriously, sir, are you very much in love with her?

Gripe. As mortal man has been.

Brass. I'm sorry for't.

Gripe. Why so, dear Brass?

Brass. If you were never to see her more now! suppose such a thing, d'you think 'twould break your heart?

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Nay, now I see you love her; would you did not.

Gripe. My dear friend!

Brass. I'm in your interest deep; you see it.

Gripe. I do: but speak—what miserable story hast thou for me?

Brass. I had rather the devil had—phu—flown away with you quick, than to see you so much in love, as I perceive you are, since——

Gripe. Since what?—ho?

Brass. Araminta, sir.

Gripe. Dead?

Brass. No.

Gripe. How then?

Brass. Worse.

Gripe. Out with it.

Brass. Broke.

Gripe. Broke!

Brass. She is, poor lady, in a most unfortunate situation of affairs. But I have said too much.

Gripe. No, no; 'tis very sad, but let's hear it.

Brass. Sir, she charged me, on my life, never to mention it to you, of all men living.

Gripe. Why, who shouldst thou tell it to, but to the best of her friends?

Brass. Ay, why, there's it now; it's going just as I fancy'd. Now will I be hanged if you are not enough in love to be engaging in this matter. But I must tell you, sir, that as much concern as I have for that most excellent, beautiful, agreeable, distressed, unfortunate lady, I'm too much your friend and servant, ever to let it be said 'twas the means of your being ruined for a woman——by letting you know she esteemed you more than any other man upon earth.

Gripe. Ruined! What dost thou mean?

Brass. Mean! Why, mean that women always ruin those that love 'em; that's the rule.

Gripe. The rule!

Brass. Yes, the rule. Why, would you have 'em ruin those that don't? How shall they bring that about?

Gripe. But is there a necessity, then, they should ruin somebody?

Brass. Yes, marry is there; how would you have 'em support their expence else? Why, sir, you cann't conceive now——you cann't conceive what Araminta's privy purse requires. Only her privy purse, sir! Why, what do you imagine, now, she gave me for the last letter I carried her from you? 'Tis true, 'twas from a man she liked, else, perhaps, I had had my bones broke. But what do you think she gave me?

Gripe. Why, mayhap——a shilling.

Brass. A guinea, sir, a guinea. You see by that how fond she was on it, by the by. But then, sir, her coach-hire, her chair-hire, her pin-money, her play-money, her china, and her charity—would consume peers. A great soul, a very great soul! But what's the end of all this?

Gripe. Ha!

Brass. Why, I'll tell you what the end is—a nunnery.

Gripe. A nunnery!

Brass. A nunnery.——In short, she is at last reduced to that extremity, and attacked with such a battalion of duns, that rather than tell her husband, (who, you know, is such a dog, he'd let her go, if she did,) she has e'en determined to turn papist, and bid the world adieu for life.

Gripe. O terrible! A papist!

Brass. Yes, when a handsome woman has brought herself into difficulties, the devil cann't help her out of——To a nunnery, that's another rule, sir.

Gripe. But, but, but, pr'ythee, Brass, but—

Brass. But all the buts in the world, sir, won't stop her: She is a woman of a noble resolution. So, sir, your humble servant. I pity her; I pity you: Turtle and mate. But the Fates will have it so: all is pack'd up, and I am now going to call her a coach; for she resolves to slip off without saying a word: and the next visit she receives from her friends will be through a melancholy grate, with a veil instead of a top-knot. [*Going.*

Gripe. It must not be; by the powers it must not; she was made for the world, and the world was made for her.

Brass. And yet you see, sir, how small a share she has on't.

Gripe. Poor woman! Is there no way to save her?

Brass. Save her! No; how can she be saved? Why, she owes above five hundred pounds.

Gripe. Oh!

Brass. Five hundred pounds, sir. She's like to be saved indeed——Not but that I know them in this town would give me one of the five, if I would persuade her to accept of the other four; but she has forbid me mentioning it to any soul living; and I have disobeyed her only to you; and so——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold—Dost think, my poor Brass, one might not order it so, as to compound those debts for——for——twelve pence in the pound?

Brass. Sir, d'ye hear? I have already try'd 'em with ten shillings, and not a rogue will prick up

his ear at it. Though, after all, for three hundred pounds, all in glittering gold, I could set their chaps a watering. But where's that to be had with honour? there's the thing, sir——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Hold once more: I have a note in my closet of two hundred, ay—and fifty, I'll go and give it her myself.

Brass. You will! very genteel truly. Go, slap-dash, and offer a woman of her scruples money, bolt in her face! why you might as well offer her a scorpion, and she'd as soon touch it.

Gripe. Shall I carry it to her creditors then, and treat with them?

Brass. Ay, that's a rare thought.

Gripe. Is not it, Brass?

Brass. Only one little inconvenience by the way.

Gripe. As how?

Brass. That they are your wife's creditors as well as her's; and perhaps it might not be altogether so well to see you clearing the debts of your neighbour's wife, and leaving those of your own unpaid.

Gripe. Why that's true now.

Brass. I'm wise, you see, sir.

Gripe. Thou art; and I'm but a young lover: But what shall we do then?

Brass. Why I'm thinking, that if you give me the note, do you see, and that I promise to give you an account of it—

Gripe. Ay, but look you, Brass——

Brass. But look you!—Why what, d'ye think I'm a pick-pocket? D'ye think I intend to run away with your note, your paltry note?

Gripe. I don't say so——I say only, that in case——

Brass. Case, sir! there's no case, but the case I have put you; and since you heap cases upon cases, where there is but three hundred rascally pounds in the case——I'll go and call a coach.

Gripe. Pr'ythee don't be so testy; come, no more words; follow me to my closet, and I'll give thee the money.

Brass. A terrible effort you make indeed; you are so much in love, your wits are all upon the wing, just going; and for three hundred pounds you put a stop to their flight: Sir, your wits are worth that, or your wits are worth nothing. Come away.

Gripe. Well, say no more, thou shalt be satisfied. [*Exeunt.*

Enter DICK.

Dick. S't——Brass! S't——

Re-enter BRASS.

Brass. Well, sir?

Dick. 'Tis not well, sir, 'tis very ill, sir; we shall be all blown up.

Brass. What, with pride and plenty?

Dick. No, sir, with an officious slut that will spoil all. In short, Flippanta has been telling her mistress and Araminta, of my passion for the young gentlewoman; and truly, to oblige me, (supposed no ill match by the by,) they are resolved to propose it immediately to her father.

Brass. That's the devil! we shall come to papers and parchments, jointures and settlements, relations meet on both sides: that's the devil.

Dick. I intended this very day to propose to Flippanta the carrying her off: And I'm sure the young housewife would have tuck'd up her coats, and have march'd.

Brass. Ay, with the body and the soul of her.

Dick. Why then, what damn'd luck is this?

Brass. 'Tis your damn'd luck, not mine: I have always seen it in your ugly phiz, in spite of your powdered periwig——pox take ye——he'll be hanged at last. Why don't you try to get her off yet?

Dick. I have no money, you dog; you know you have stript me of every penny.

Brass. Come, damn it, I'll venture one cargo more upon your rotten bottom: but if ever I see one glance of your hempen fortune again, I'm off your partnership for ever——I shall never thrive with him.

Dick. An impudent rogue; but he's in possession of my estate, so I must bear with him. [*Aside.*

Brass. Well, come, I'll raise a hundred pounds for your use, upon my wife's jewels here; [*Pulling out the necklace.*] her necklace shall pawn for't.

Dick. Remember though, that if things fail, I'm to have the necklace again; you know you agreed to that?

Brass. Yes, and if I make it good, you'll be the better for't; if not, I shall: so you see where the cause will pinch.

Dick. Why, you barbarous dog, you won't offer to——

Brass. No words now; about your business, march. Go stay for me at the next tavern: I'll go to Flippanta, and try what I can do for you.

Dick. Well, I'll go, but don't think to——O pox, sir—— [*Exit* DICK.

BRASS *solus.*

Brass. Will you be gone? A pretty title you'd have to sue me upon truly, if I should have a mind to stand upon the defensive, as perhaps I may; I have done the rascal service enough to lull my conscience upon it, I'm sure: But 'tis time enough for that. Let me see——first I'll go to Flippanta, and put a stop to this family way of match-making, then sell our necklace for what ready money it will produce; and, by this time to-morrow, I hope we shall be in possession of——t'other jewel here; a precious jewel, as she's set in gold! I believe for the stone itself we may part with it again to a friend——for a tester. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—GRIPE'S *House.*

Enter BRASS *and* FLIPPANTA.

Brass. Well, you agree I'm in the right, don't you?

Flip. I don't know; if your master has the estate he talks of, why not do it all above-board? Well, though I am not much of his mind, I'm much in his interest, and will therefore endeavour to serve him in his own way,

Brass. That's kindly said, my child, and I believe I shall reward thee one of these days, with as pretty a fellow to thy husband for it, as——

Flip. Hold your prating, Jack-a-dandy, and leave me to my business.

Brass. I obey—adieu. [*Kisses her.*]

[*Exit* BRASS.

Flip. Rascal!

Enter CORINNA.

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, I'm ready to sink down, my legs tremble under me, my dear Flippy.

Flip. And what's the affair?

Cor. My father's there within, with my mother and Araminta; I never saw him in so good a humour in my life.

Flip. And is that it that frightens you so?

Cor. Ah, Flippanta, they are just going to speak to him about my marrying the colonel.

Flip. Are they so? so much the worse; they are too hasty.

Cor. O no, not a bit; I slipt out on purpose, you must know, to give them an opportunity; would it were done already.

Flip. I tell you no; get you in again immediately, and prevent it.

Cor. My dear, dear, I am not able; I never was in such a way before.

Flip. Never in a way to be married before, ha? is not that it?

Cor. Ah, lord, if I'm thus before I come to it, Flippanta, what shall I be upon the very spot? Do but feel with what a thumpaty thump it goes. [*Putting her hand to her heart.*

Flip. Nay, it does make a filthy bustle, that's the truth on't, child; but I believe I shall make it leap another way, when I tell you, I'm cruelly afraid your father won't consent, after all.

Cor. Why, he won't be the death of me, will he?

Flip. I don't know, old folks are cruel; but we'll have a trick for him. Brass and I have been consulting upon the matter, and agreed upon a surer way of doing it in spite of his teeth.

Cor. Ay, marry, sir, that were something.

Flip. But then he must not know a word of any thing towards it.

Cor. No, no.

Flip. So, get you in immediately.

Cor. One, two, three, and away. [*Running off.*

Flip. And prevent your mother's speaking on't.

Cor. But is t'other way sure, Flippanta?

Flip. Fear nothing; it will only depend upon you.

Cor. Nay then—O ho, ho, ho, how pure that is! [*Exit* CORINNA.

FLIPPANTA *sola.*

Poor child! we may do what we will with her, as far as marrying her goes; when that's over, 'tis possible she may not prove altogether so tractable. But who's here? my sharper, I think: Yes.

Enter MONEY-TRAP.

Mon. Well, my best friend, how go matters? Has the restitution been received, ha? Was she pleased with it?

Flip. Yes, truly; that is, she was pleased to see there was so honest a man in this immoral age.

Mon. Well, but a——does she know that it was I that——

Flip. Why, you must know I begun to give her a little sort of a hint, and——and so—why, and so she began to put on a sort of a severe, haughty, reserved, angry, forgiving air. But soft; here she comes: you'll see how you stand with her presently: but don't be afraid. Courage.

Mon. He, hem.

Enter CLARISSA.

'Tis no small piece of good fortune, madam, to find you at home: I have often endeavoured it in vain.

Clar. 'Twas then unknown to me; for if I could often receive the visits of so good a friend at home, I should be more reasonably blamed for being so much abroad.

Mon. Madam, you make me——

Clar. You are the man of the world whose company I think is most to be desired. I don't compliment you when I tell you so, I assure you.

Mon. Alas, madam, your poor humble servant——

Clar. My poor humble servant however (with all the esteem I have for him) stands suspected with me for a vile trick, I doubt he has play'd me, which if I could prove upon him, I'm afraid I should punish him very severely.

Mon. I hope, madam, you'll believe I am not capable of——

Clar. Look you, look you, you are capable of whatever you please, you have a great deal of wit, and know how to give a nice and gallant turn to every thing: but if you will have me

continue your friend, you must leave me in some uncertainty in this matter.

Mon. Madam, I do then protest to you——

Clar. Come, protest nothing about it; I am but too penetrating, as you may perceive: but we sometimes shut our eyes, rather than break with our friends; for a thorough knowledge of the truth of this business would make me very seriously angry.

Mon. 'Tis very certain, madam, that——

Clar. Come, say no more on't, I beseech you, for I'm in a good deal of heat while I but think on't; if you'll walk in, I'll follow you presently.

Mon. Your goodness, madam, is——

Flip. War, horse. [*Aside to* MONEY-TRAP.] No fine speeches, you'll spoil all.

Mon. Thou art a most incomparable person.

Flip. Nay it goes rarely; but get you in, and I'll say a little something to my lady for you, while she is warm.

Mon. But, hist, Flippanta, how long do'st think she may hold out?

Flip. Phu, not a twelvemonth.

Mon. Boo.

Flip. Away, I say. [*Pushing him out.*

Clar. Is he gone? What a wretch it is! he never was quite such a beast before.

Flip. Poor mortal, his money is finely laid out, truly.

Clar. I suppose there may have been much such another scene within between Araminta and my dear: but I left him so insupportably brisk, 'tis impossible he can have parted with any money: I'm afraid Brass has not succeeded as thou hast done, Flippanta.

Flip. By my faith but he has, and better too; he presents his humble duty to Araminta, and has sent her——this. [*Shewing the note.*

Clar. A bill from my love for two hundred and fifty pounds. The monster! he would not part with ten to save his lawful wife from everlasting torment.

Flip. Never complain of his avarice, madam, as long as you have his money.

Clar. But is not he a beast, Flippanta? methinks the restitution look'd better by half.

Flip. Madam, the man's beast enough, that's certain; but which way will you go to receive his beastly money, for I must not appear with his note?

Clar. That's true; why send for Mrs Amlet; that's a mighty useful woman, that Mrs Amlet.

Flip. Marry is she; we should have been basely puzzled how to dispose of the necklace without her; it would have been dangerous offering it to sale.

Clar. It would so, for I know your master has been laying out for it amongst the goldsmiths. But I stay here too long. I must in and coquet it a little more to my lover, Araminta will get ground on me else. [*Exit* CLARISSA.

Flip. And I'll go send for Mrs Amlet.

[*Exit* FLIPPANTA.

SCENE II.—*Opens.*

ARAMINTA, CORINNA, GRIPE, *and* MONEY-TRAP *at a Tea-table, very gay and laughing.* CLARISSA *comes in to them.*

Omnes. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Mon. Mighty well, O mighty well indeed!

Clar. Save you, save you, good folks, you are all in rare humour methinks.

Gripe. Why, what should we be otherwise for, madam?

Clar. Nay, I don't know, not I, my dear; but I ha'n't had the happiness of seeing you so since our honey-moon was over, I think.

Gripe. Why, to tell you the truth, my dear, 'tis the joy of seeing you at home; [*Kisses her.*] You see what charms you have, when you are pleased to make use of them.

Aram. Very gallant, truly.

Clar. Nay, and what's more, you must know, he's never to be otherwise henceforwards; we have come to an agreement about it.

Mon. Why, here's my love and I have been upon just such another treaty too.

Aram. Well, sure there's some very peaceful star rules at present. Pray Heaven continue its reign.

Mon. Pray do you continue its reign, you ladies; for 'tis all in your power.

[*Leering at* CLARISSA.

Gripe. My neighbour Money-trap says true; at least I'll confess frankly [*Ogling* ARAMINTA.] 'tis in one lady's power to make me the best-humour'd man on earth.

Mon. And I'll answer for another, that has the same over me. [*Ogling* CLARISSA.

Clar. 'Tis mighty fine, gentlemen, mighty civil husbands indeed.

Gripe. Nay, what I say's true, and so true, that, all quarrels being now at an end, I am willing, if you please, to dispense with all that fine company we talked of to-day, be content with the friendly conversation of our two good neighbours here, and spend all my toying hours alone with my sweet wife.

Mon. Why, truly, I think now, if these good women pleased, we might make up the prettiest little neighbourly company between our two families, and set a defiance to all the impertinent people in the world.

Clar. The rascals! [*Aside.*

Aram. Indeed I doubt you'd soon grow weary, if we grew fond.

Gripe. Never, never, for our wives have wit, neighbour, and that never palls.

Clar. And our husbands have generosity, Araminta, and that seldom palls.

Gripe. So, that's a wipe for me now, because I did not give her a new-year's gift last time; but be good, and I'll think of some tea-cups for you next year.

Mon. And perhaps I may not forget a fan, or as good a thing——hum, hussy.

Clar. Well, upon these encouragements, Araminta, we'll try how good we can be.

Gripe. Well, this goes most rarely: poor Money-trap, he little thinks what makes his wife so easy in his company. [*Aside.*

Mon. I cann't but pity poor neighbour Gripe. Lard, lard, what a fool does his wife and I make of him! [*Aside.*

Clar. Are not these two wretched rogues, Araminta? [*Aside to* ARAMINTA.

Aram. They are indeed. [*Aside to* CLARISSA.

Enter JESSAMIN.

Jes. Sir, here's Mr Clip, the goldsmith, desires to speak with you.

Gripe. Cods so, perhaps some news of your necklace, my dear.

Clar. That would be news indeed.

Gripe. Let him come in.

Enter Mr CLIP.

Gripe. Mr Clip, your servant, I'm glad to see you: how do you do?

Clip. At your service, sir, very well. Your servant, madam Gripe.

Clar. Horrid fellow! [*Aside.*

Gripe. Well, Mr Clip, no news yet of my wife's necklace?

Clip. If you please to let me speak with you in the next room, I have something to say to you.

Gripe. Ay, with all my heart. Shut the door after us. [*They come forward, and the scene shuts behind them.*] Well, any news?

Clip. Look you, sir, here's a necklace brought me to sell, at least very like that you described to me.

Gripe. Let's see't—*Victoria!* the very same. Ah, my dear Mr Clip—[*Kisses him.*] But who brought it you? you should have seized him.

Clip. 'Twas a young fellow that I know: I cann't tell whether he may be guilty, though it's like enough. But he has only left it me now to shew a brother of our trade, and will call upon me again presently.

Gripe. Wheedle him hither, dear Mr Clip. Here's my neighbour Money-trap in the house; he's a justice, and will commit him presently.

Clip. 'Tis enough.

Enter BRASS.

Gripe. O, my friend Brass!

Brass. Hold, sir, I think that's a gentleman I'm looking for.——Mr Clip, O your servant! What, are you acquainted here? I have just been at your shop.

Clip. I only stept here to shew Mr Gripe the necklace you left.

Brass. Why, sir, do you understand jewels? [*To* GRIPE.] I thought you had dealt only in gold. But I smoke the matter—Hark you—a word in your ear—you are going to play the gallant again, and make a purchase on't for Araminta; ha, ha!

Gripe. Where had you the necklace?

Brass. Look you, don't trouble yourself about that; it's in commission with me, and I can help you to a pennyworth on't.

Gripe. A pennyworth on't, villain? [*Strikes at him.*

Brass. Villain! a hey, a hey. Is't you or me, Mr Clip, he's pleased to compliment?

Clip. What do you think on't, sir?

Brass. Think on't! now the devil fetch me if I know what to think on't.

Gripe. You'll sell a pennyworth, rogue, of a thing you have stolen from me.

Brass. Stolen! pray, sir——what wine have you drank to-day? it has a very merry effect upon you.

Gripe. You villain, either give me an account how you stole it, or—

Brass. O ho, sir, if you please, don't carry your jest too far, I don't understand hard words, I give you warning on't: if you ha'n't a mind to buy the necklace, you may let it alone, I know how to dispose on't. What a pox!—

Gripe. O, you sha'n't have that trouble, sir. Dear Mr Clip, you may leave the necklace here; I'll call at your shop, and thank you for your care.

Clip. Sir, your humble servant. [*Going.*

Brass. O ho, Mr Clip, if you please, sir, this won't do, [*Stopping him.*] I don't understand raillery in such matters.

Clip. I leave it with Mr Gripe, do you and he dispute it. [*Exit* CLIP.

Brass. Ay, but 'tis from you, by your leave, sir, that I expect it. [*Going after him*

Gripe. You expect, you rogue, to make your escape, do you? but I have other accounts besides this to make up with you. To be sure the dog has cheated me of two hundred and fifty pounds. Come, villain, give me an account of——

Brass. Account of!—sir, give me an account of my necklace, or I'll make such a noise in your house, I'll raise the devil in't.

Gripe. Well said, courage.

Brass. Blood and thunder, give it me, or—

Gripe. Come, hush, be wise, and I'll make no noise of this affair.

Brass. You'll make no noise! but I'll make a noise, and a damned noise too. O, don't think to—

Gripe. I tell thee I will not hang thee.

Brass. But I tell you I will hang you, if you don't give me my necklace, I will, rot me.

Gripe. Speak softly, be wise; how came it thine? who gave it thee?

Brass. A gentleman, a friend of mine.

Gripe. What's his name?

Brass. His name!—I'm in such a passion I have forgot it.

Gripe. Ah, brazen rogue—thou hast stole it from my wife; 'tis the same she lost six weeks ago.

Brass. This has not been in England a month.

Gripe. You are a son of a whore.

Brass. Give me my necklace.

Gripe. Give me my two hundred and fifty pound note.

Brass. Yet I offer peace: one word without passion. The case stands thus, either I'm out of my wits, or you are out of yours. Now 'tis plain I am not out of my wits, ergo——

Gripe. My bill, hangdog, or I'll strangle thee. [*They struggle.*

Brass. Murder, murder!

Enter CLARISSA, ARAMINTA, CORINNA, FLIPPANTA, *and* MONEY-TRAP.

Flip. What's the matter? What's the matter here?

Gripe. I'll matter him.

Clar. Who makes thee cry out thus, poor Brass?

Brass. Why, your husband, madam, he's in his altitudes here.

Gripe. Robber!

Brass. Here, he has cheated me of a diamond necklace.

Cor. Who, papa? Ah dear me!

Clar. Pr'ythee what's the meaning of this great emotion, my dear?

Gripe. The meaning is that—I'm quite out of breath—this son of a whore has got your necklace, that's all.

Clar. My necklace!

Gripe. That birdlime there——stole it.

Clar. Impossible!

Brass. Madam, you see master's a little—touched, that's all. Twenty ounces of blood let loose would set all right again.

Gripe. Here, call a constable presently. Neighbour Money-trap, you'll commit him.

Brass. D'ye hear? D'ye hear? See how wild he looks: how his eyes roll in his head: tie him down, or he'll do some mischief or other.

Gripe. Let me come at him.

Clar. Hold—pr'ythee, my dear, reduce things to a little temperance, and let us coolly into the secret of this disagreeable rupture.

Gripe. Well then, without passion: why, you must know, (but I'll have him hanged,) you must know that he came to Mr Clip, to Mr Clip the dog did—with a necklace to sell; so Mr Clip having notice before that (can you deny this, sirrah?) that you had lost yours, brings it to me. Look at it here, do you know it again? Ah, you traitor. [*To* BRASS.

Brass. He makes me mad. Here's an appearance of something now to the company, and yet nothing in't in the bottom.

Enter Constable.

Clar. Flippanta! [*Aside to* FLIPPANTA, *shewing the necklace.*

Flip. 'Tis it, faith; here's some mystery in this; we must look about us.

Clar. The safest way is point blank to disown the necklace.

Flip. Right; stick to that.

Gripe. Well, madam, do you know your old acquaintance, ho?

Clar. Why, truly, my dear, though (as you may all imagine) I should be very glad to recover so valuable a thing as my necklace, yet I must be just to all the world—this necklace is not mine.

Brass. Huzza!—Here, constable, do your duty; Mr Justice, I demand my necklace, and satisfaction of him.

Gripe. I'll die before I part with it; I'll keep it, and have him hanged.

Clar. But be a little calm, my dear! do, my bird, and then thou'lt be able to judge rightly of things.

Gripe. O good lack, O good lack!

Clar. No, but don't give way to fury and interest both; either of 'em are passions strong enough to lead a wise man out of the way. The necklace not being really mine, give it the man again, and come drink a dish of tea.

Brass. Ay, madam says right.

Gripe. Oons, if you with your addle head don't know your own jewels, I with my solid one do; and if I part with it, may famine be my portion.

Clar. But don't swear and curse thyself at this fearful rate; don't, my dove: be temperate in your words, and just in all your actions, 'twill bring a blessing upon you and your family.

Gripe. Bring thunder and lightning upon me and my family, if I part with my necklace.

Clar. Why, you'll have the lightning burn your house about your ears, my dear, if you go on in these practices.

Mon. A most excellent woman this. [*Aside.*

Enter Mrs AMLET.

Gripe. I'll keep my necklace.

Brass. Will you so? Then here comes one has a title to it, if I ha'n't; let Dick bring himself off with her as he can. Mrs Amlet, you are come in very good time; you lost a necklace t'other day, and who do you think has got it?

Mrs Am. Marry, that I know not, I wish I did.

Brass. Why then here's Mr Gripe has it, and swears 'tis his wife's.

Gripe. And so I do, sirrah.—Look here, mistress, do you pretend this is yours?

Mrs Am. Not for the round world I would not say it; I only kept it to do madam a small courtesy, that's all.

Clar. Ah, Flippanta, all will out now! [*Aside to* FLIP.

Gripe. Courtesy! what courtesy?

Mrs Am. A little money only that madam had present need of; please to pay me that, and I demand no more.

Brass. So here's fresh game; I have started a new hare, I find. [*Aside.*

Gripe. How forsooth, is this true? [*To* CLAR.

Clar. You are in a humour at present, love, to believe any thing, so I won't take the pains to contradict it.

Brass. This damned necklace will spoil all our affairs; this is Dick's luck again. [*Aside.*

Gripe. Are you not ashamed of these ways? Do you see how you are exposed before your best friends here? Don't you blush at it?

Clar. I do blush, my dear, but 'tis for you, that

here it should appear to the world, you keep me so bare of money, I'm forced to pawn my jewels.

Gripe. Impudent housewife!

[*Raising his hand to strike her.*

Clar. Softly, chicken; you might have prevented all this, by giving me the two hundred and fifty pounds you sent to Araminta e'en now.

Brass. You see, sir, I delivered your note—How I have been abused to-day!

Gripe. I'm betrayed—Jades on both sides, I see that. [*Aside.*

Mon. But, madam, madam, is this true that I hear? Have you taken a present of two hundred and fifty pounds? Pray what were you to return for these pounds, madam, ha?

Aram. Nothing, my dear; I only took 'em to reimburse you of about the same sum you sent to Clarissa.

Mon. Hum, hum, hum.

Gripe. How, gentlewoman, did you receive money from him?

Clar. O, my dear, it was only in jest, I knew you'd give it again to his wife.

Mrs Am. But, amongst all this bustle, I don't hear a word of my hundred pounds. Is it madam will pay me, or master?

Gripe. I pay? the devil shall pay.

Clar. Look you, my dear, malice apart, pay Mrs Amlet her money, and I'll forgive you the wrong you intended my bed with Araminta: am not I a good wife now?

Gripe. I burst with rage, and will get rid of this noose, though I tuck myself up in another.

Mon. Nay, pray, e'en tuck me up with you.

[*Exeunt* MON. *and* GRIPE.

Clar. and Aram. B'y, dearies!

Enter DICK.

Cor. Look, look, Flippanta, here's the colonel come at last.

Dick. Ladies, I ask your pardon I have stayed so long, but——

Mrs Am. Ah, rogue's face, have I got thee, old good-for-nought? Sirrah, sirrah, do you think to amuse me with your marriages and your great fortunes? Thou hast played me a rare prank, by my conscience: why, you ungracious rascal, what do you think will be the end of all this? Now heaven forgive me, but I have a great mind to hang thee for't.

Cor. She talks to him very familiarly, Flippanta.

Flip. So methinks, by my faith.

Brass. Now the rogue's star is making an end of him. [*Aside.*

Dick. What shall I do with her? [*Aside.*

Mrs Am. Do but look at him, my dames, he has the countenance of a cherubim, but he's a rogue in his heart.

Clar. What is the meaning of all this, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. The meaning, good lack! Why this all-to-be-powdered rascal here is my son, an't please you; ha, graceless? Now I'll make you own your mother, vermin.

Clar. What, the colonel your son?

Mrs Am. 'Tis Dick, madam, that rogue Dick I have so often told you of, with tears trickling down my old cheeks.

Aram. The woman's mad, it can never be.

Mrs Am. Speak, rogue, am I not thy mother, ha? Did I not bring thee forth? say then.

Dick. What will you have me say? You had a mind to ruin me, and you have done it; would you do any more?

Clar. Then, sir, you are a son to good Mrs Amlet?

Aram. And have had the assurance to put upon us all this while?

Flip. And the confidence to think of marrying Corinna?

Brass. And the impudence to hire me for your servant, who am as well born as yourself?

Clar. Indeed I think he should be corrected.

Aram. Indeed I think he deserves to be cudgelled.

Flip. Indeed I think he might be pumpt.

Brass. Indeed I think he will be hanged.

Mrs Am. Good lack-a-day, good lack-a-day! there's no need to be so smart upon him neither; if he is not a gentleman, he's a gentleman's fellow. Come hither, Dick, they sha'n't run thee down neither: cock up thy hat, Dick, and tell them, though Mrs Amlet is thy mother, she can make thee amends, with ten thousand good pounds to buy thee some lands, and build thee a house in the midst on't.

Omnes. How!

Clar. Ten thousand pounds, Mrs Amlet?

Mrs Am. Yes forsooth, though I should lose the hundred you pawned your necklace for. Tell 'em of that, Dick.

Cor. Look you, Flippanta, I can hold no longer, and I hate to see the young man abused. And so, sir, if you please, I'm your friend and servant, and what's mine is yours: and when our estates are put together, I don't doubt but we shall do as well as the best of 'em.

Dick. Sayest thou so, my little queen? Why then, if dear mother will give us her blessing, the parson shall give us a tack. We'll get her a score of grand-children, and a merry house we'll make her. [*They kneel to Mrs* AMLET.

Mrs Am. Ah—ha, ha, ha, ha, the pretty pair, the pretty pair! Rise, my chickens, rise; rise and face the proudest of them. And if madam does not deign to give her consent, a fig for her, Dick. Why how now?

Clar. Pray, Mrs Amlet, don't be in a passion, the girl is my husband's girl, and if you can have his consent, upon my word you shall have mine, for any thing that belongs to him.

Flip. Then all is peace again, but we have been more lucky than wise.

Aram. And I suppose for us, Clarissa, we are to go on with our dears as we used to do.

Clar. Just in the same tract, for this late treaty of agreement with 'em was so unnatural, you see it could not hold. But 'tis just as well with us as if it had. Well, 'tis a strange fate, good folks. But while you live, every thing gets well out of a broil but a husband. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS BARRY.

I've heard wise men in politics lay down
What feats by little England might be done,
Were all agreed, and all would act as one.
Ye wives a useful hint from this might take,
The heavy, old, despotic kingdom shake,
And make your matrimonial monsieurs quake.
Our heads are feeble, and we're cramped by laws,
Our hands are weak, and not too strong our cause;
Yet would those heads and hands, such as they are,
In firm confederacy resolve on war.
You'd find your tyrants——what I've found my dear.
What only two united can produce,
You've seen to-night, a sample for your use:
Single, we found we nothing could obtain;
We joined our force—and we subdued our men.
Believe me, my dear sex, they are not brave;
Try each your man, you'll quickly find your slave
I know they'll make campaigns, risk blood and life,
But this is a more terrifying strife;
They'll stand a shot who'll tremble at a wife.
Beat then your drums, and your shrill trumpets sound,
Let all your visits of your feats resound,
And deeds of war in cups of tea go round.
The stars are with you, fate is in your hand,
In twelve months time you've vanquished half the land;
Be wise, and keep 'em under good command.
This year will to your glory long be known,
And deathless ballads hand your triumphs down;
Your late achievements ever will remain,
For though you cannot boast of many slain,
Your prisoners shew, you've made a brave campaign.

THE

MISTAKE.

BY

VANBURGH.

PROLOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR STEELE.

SPOKEN BY MR BOOTH.

OUR author's wit and raillery to-night
Perhaps might please, but that your stage delight
No more is in your minds, but ears and sight.
With audiences composed of belles and beaux,
The first dramatic rule is, have good clothes,
To charm the gay spectator's gentle breast;
In lace and feather, tragedy's express'd,
And heroes die unpity'd, if ill-dress'd.
The other style you full as well advance;
If 'tis a comedy, you ask——Who dance?
For, oh! what dire convulsions have of late
Torn and distracted each dramatic state,
On this great question, which house first should sell
The new French steps, imported by Ruelle!
Desbarques cann't rise so high, we must agree,
They've half a foot in height more wit than we.
But though the genius of our learned age
Thinks fit to dance and sing, quite off the stage,
True action, comic mirth, and tragic rage;
Yet, as your taste now stands, our author draws
Some hopes of your indulgence and applause.
For that great end, this edifice he made,
Where humble swain at lady's feet is laid;
Where the pleased nymph her conquer'd lover spies,
Then to glass pillars turns her conscious eyes,
And points a-new each charm, for which he dies.
The muse, before nor terrible nor great,
Enjoys by him this awful gilded seat:
By him, theatric angels mount more high,
And mimic thunders shake a broader sky.
Thus all must own, our author has done more
For your delight, than ever bard before.
His thoughts are still to raise your pleasures fill'd;
To write, translate, to blazon, or to build.
Then take him in the lump, nor nicely pry
Into small faults, that 'scape a busy eye;
But kindly, sirs, consider, he to-day
Finds you the house, the actors, and the play:
So, though we stage-mechanic rules omit,
You must allow it in a wholesale wit.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Don ALVAREZ, *Father to Leonora.*
Don FELIX, *Father to Lorenzo.*
Don CARLOS, } *in Love with Leonora.*
Don LORENZO, }
METAPHRASTUS, *Tutor to Camillo.*
SANCHO, *Servant to Carlos.*
LOPEZ, *Servant to Lorenzo.*
A Bravo.

WOMEN.

LEONORA, *Daughter to Alvarez.*
CAMILLO, *supposed Son to Alvarez.*
ISABELLA, *her Friend.*
JACINTA, *Servant to Leonora.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter CARLOS *and* SANCHO.

Car. I tell thee, I am satisfied; I'm in love enough to be suspicious of every body.

San. And yet methinks, sir, you should leave me out.

Car. It may be so; I cann't tell: But I'm not at ease. If they don't make a knave, at least they will make a fool of thee.

San. I don't believe a word on't: But good faith, master, your love makes somewhat of you: I don't know what 'tis; but methinks when you suspect me, you don't seem a man of half those parts I used to take you for. Look in my face, 'tis round and comely, not one hollow line of a villain in it: men of my fabric don't use to be suspected for knaves; and when you take us for fools, we never take you for wise men. For my part, in this present case, I take myself to be mighty deep. A stander-by, sir, sees more than a gamester. You are pleased to be jealous of your poor mistress without a cause; she uses you but too well, in my humble opinion; she sees you, and talks with you, till I'm quite tired on't sometimes; and your rival, that you are so scared about, forces a visit upon her, about once in a fortnight.

Car. Alas! thou art ignorant in these affairs; he that's the civilest received, is often the least cared for: women appear warm to one, to hide a flame for another. Lorenzo, in short, appears too composed of late to be a rejected lover, and the indifference he shews upon the favours I seem to receive from her, poisons the pleasure I else should taste in them, and keeps me upon a perpetual rack. No—I would fain see some of his jealous transports, have him fire at the sight of me, contradict me whenever I speak, affront me wherever he meets me, challenge me, fight me—

San. —Run you through the guts.

Car. But he's too calm, his heart's too much at ease, to leave me mine at rest.

San. But, sir, you forget that there are two ways for our hearts to get at ease; when our mistresses come to be very fond of us, or we—not to care a fig for them. Now, suppose, upon the rebukes you know he has had, it should chance to be the latter.

Car. Again thy ignorance appears; alas! a lover who has broke his chain, will shun the tyrant that enslaved him. Indifference never is his lot; he loves or hates for ever; and if his mistress proves another's prize, he cannot calmly see her in his arms.

San. For my part, master, I'm not so great a philosopher as you be, nor (thank my stars) so bitter a lover, but what I see—that I generally believe; and when Jacinta tells me she loves me dearly, I have good thoughts enough of my person never to doubt the truth on't. See here the baggage comes.

Enter JACINTA *with a letter.*

Hist! Jacinta! my dear.

Jac. Who's that, Blunderbuss? Where's your master?

San. Hard by. [*Shewing him.*

Jac. O, sir, I'm glad I have found you at last; I believe I have travelled five miles after you, and could neither find you at home, nor in the walks, nor at church, or at the opera, nor——

San. Nor any where else, where he was not to be found: If you had looked for him where he was, 'twas ten to one but you had met with him.

Jac. I had, Jack-a-dandy!

Car. But, pr'ythee, what's the matter? Who sent you after me?

Jac. One who's never well but when she sees you, I think; 'twas my lady.

Car. Dear Jacinta, I fain would flatter myself, but am not able; the blessing's too great to be my lot; yet 'tis not well to trifle with me; how short soe'er I am in other merit, the tenderness I have for Leonora claims something from her generosity. I should not be deluded.

Jac. And why do you think you are? Methinks she's pretty well above board with you: What must be done more to satisfy you?

San. Why Lorenzo must hang himself, and then we are content.

Jac. How! Lorenzo?

San. If less will do, he'll tell you.

Jac. Why, you are not mad, sir, are you? Jealous of him! Pray which way may this have got into your head? I took you for a man of sense before.—Is this your doings, log? [*To* SANCHO.

San. No, forsooth, Pert, I'm not much given to suspicion, as you can tell, Mrs Forward——If I were, I might find more cause, I guess, than your mistress has given our master here. But I have so many pretty thoughts of my own person, hussy, more than I have of yours, that I stand in dread of no man.

Jac. That's the way to prosper, however; so far I'll confess the truth to thee; at least, if that don't do, nothing else will. Men are mighty simple in love-matters, sir; when you suspect a woman's falling off, you fall a-plaguing her to bring her on again, attack her with reason and a sour face: 'udslife, sir, attack her with a fiddle, double your good-humour—give her a ball—powder your periwig at her—let her cheat you at cards a little, and I'll warrant all's right again. But to come upon a poor woman with the gloomy face of jealousy, before she gives the least occasion for't, is to set a complaisant rival in too favour-

able a light. Sir, sir, I must tell you, I have seen those who have owed their success to nothing else.

Car. Say no more; I have been to blame, but there shall be no more on't.

Jac. I should punish you but justly however for what's past, if I carried back what I have brought you; but I'm good-natured, so here 'tis; open it, and see how wrong you timed your jealousy.

Car. [*Reads.*] "If you love me with that tenderness you have made me long believe you do, this letter will be welcome; 'tis to tell you, you have leave to plead a daughter's weakness to a father's indulgence: and if you prevail with him to lay his commands upon me, you shall be as happy as my obedience to them can make you.

LEONORA."

Then I shall be what man was never yet. [*Kissing the letter.*] Ten thousand blessings on thee for thy news; I could adore thee as a deity.

[*Embracing* JAC.

Jac. True flesh and blood, every inch of her, for all that.

Car. [*Reads again.*] "And if you prevail with him to lay his commands upon me, you shall be as happy as my obedience to them can make you." O happy, happy Carlos! But what shall I say to thee for this welcome message? [*To* JACINTA.] Alas! I want words—But let this speak for me, and this, and this, and——

[*Giving her his ring, watch, and purse.*

San. Hold, sir; pray leave a little something for our board-wages. You cann't carry 'em all, I believe: [*To* JACINTA.] Shall I ease thee of this? [*Offering to take the purse.*

Jac. No; but you may carry—that, sirrah.

[*Giving him a box on the ear.*

San. The jade's grown purse-proud already.

Car. Well, dear Jacinta, say something to your charming mistress, that I am not able to say myself: But, above all, excuse my late unpardonable folly, and offer her my life to expiate my crime.

Jac. The best plea for pardon will be never to repeat the fault.

Car. If that will do, 'tis sealed for ever.

Jac. Enough; but I must be gone; success attend you with the old gentleman. Good-by t'ye, sir. [*Exit* JAC.

Car. Eternal blessings follow thee.

San. I think she has taken them all with her; the jade has got her apron full.

Car. Is not that Lorenzo coming this way?

San. Yes, 'tis he; for my part now I pity the poor gentleman.

Enter LORENZO.

Car. I'll let him see at last I can be cheerful too. Your servant, Don Lorenzo; how do you do this morning?

Lor. I thank you, Don Carlos; perfectly well both in body and in mind.

Car. What! cured of your love then?

Lor. No, nor I hope I never shall. May I ask you how 'tis with yours?

Car. Increasing every hour: we are very constant both.

Lor. I find so much delight in being so, I hope I never shall be otherwise.

Car. Those joys I am well acquainted with;—but should lose them soon, were I to meet a cool reception.

Lor. That's every generous lover's case, no doubt; an angel could not fire my heart but with an equal flame.

Car. And yet you said you still loved Leonora.

Lor. And yet I said I loved her.

Car. Does she then return you——

Lor. Every thing my passion can require.

Car. Its wants are small I find.

Lor. Extended as the heavens.

Car. I pity you.

Lor. He must be a deity that does so.

Car. Yet I'm a mortal, and once more can pity you. Alas, Lorenzo, 'tis a poor cordial to an aching heart, to have the tongue alone announce it happy; besides 'tis mean; you should be more a man.

Lor. I find I have made you an unhappy one, so can forgive the boilings of your spleen.

Car. This seeming calmness might have the effect your vanity proposes by it; had I not a testimony of her love would (should I shew it) sink you to the centre.

Lor. Yet still I'm calm as ever.

Car. Nay, then have at your peace. Read that, and end the farce.

[*Gives him* LEONORA'S *letter.*

Lor. [*Reads.*] I have read it.

Car. And know the hand?

Lor. 'Tis Leonora's; I have often seen it.

Car. I hope you then at last are satisfied.

Lor. I am. [*Smiling.*] Good-morrow, Carlos.

[*Exit* LOR.

San. Sure he's mad, master.

Car. Mad! sayest thou?

San. And yet, by'r lady, that was a sort of a dry sober smile at going off.

Car. A very sober one! had he shewn me such a letter, I had put on another countenance.

San. Ay, o' my conscience had you.

Car. Here's mystery in this——I like it not.

San. I see his man and confidant there, Lopez. Shall I draw him on a Scotch pair of boots, master, and make him tell all?

Car. Some questions I must ask him; call him hither.

San. Hem, Lopez, hem!

Enter LOPEZ.

Lop. Who calls?

San. I, and my master.

Lop. I cann't stay.

San. You can indeed, sir.

[*Laying hold on him.*

Car. Whither in such haste, honest Lopez? What! upon some love-errand?

Lop. Sir, your servant; I ask your pardon, but I was going——

Car. I guess where, but you need not be shy

of me any more; thy master and I are no longer rivals; I have yielded up the cause; the lady will have it so, so I submit.

Lop. Is it possible, sir? shall I then live to see my master and you friends again?

San. Yes, and what's better, thou and I shall be friends too. There will be no more fear of Christian bloodshed. I give thee up Jacinta; she's a slippery hussy, so master and I are going to match ourselves elsewhere.

Lop. But is it possible, sir, your honour should be in earnest? I'm afraid you are pleased to be merry with your poor humble servant.

Car. I'm not at present much disposed to mirth; my indifference in this matter is not so thoroughly formed: but my reason has so far mastered my passion, to shew me, 'tis in vain to pursue a woman whose heart already is another's. 'Tis what I have so plainly seen of late, I have roused my resolution to my aid, and broke my chains for ever.

Lop. Well, sir, to be plain with you, this is the joyfullest news I have heard this long time; for I always knew you to be a mighty honest gentleman; and, good faith, it often went to the heart o' me to see you so abused. Dear, dear, have I often said to myself (when they have had a private meeting just after you have been gone)——

Car. Ha!

San. Hold, master, don't kill him yet. [*To* CAR. *aside.*

Lop. I say I have said to myself, what wicked things are women, and what pity it is they should be suffered in a Christian country; what a shame they should be allowed to play will-in-the-wisp with men of honour, and lead them through thorns and briars, and rocks, and rugged ways, till their hearts are all torn to pieces, like an old coat in a fox-chace! I say, I have said to myself——

Car. Thou hast said enough to thyself, but say a little more to me: where were these secret meetings thou talk'st of?

Lop. In sundry places, and by divers ways: sometimes in the cellar, sometimes in the garret, sometimes in the court, sometimes in the gutter: but the place where the kiss of kisses was given was——

Car. In hell.

Lop. Sir!

Car. Speak, fury, what dost thou mean by the kiss of kisses?

Lop. The kiss of peace, sir, the kiss of union, the kiss of consummation.

Car. Thou liest, villain!

Lop. I don't know but I may, sir—What the devil's the matter now? [*Aside.*

Car. There's not one word of truth in all thy cursed tongue has uttered.

Lop. No, sir, I—I—believe there is not.

Car. Why then didst thou say it, wretch?

Lop. O———only in jest.

Car. I am not in a jesting condition.

Lop. Nor I—at present, sir.

Car. Speak then the truth, as thou wouldst do it at the hour of death.

Lop. Yes, at the gallows, and be turned off as soon as I've done. [*Aside.*

Car. What's that you murmur?

Lop. Nothing but a short prayer.

Car. I am distracted, and fright the wretch from telling me, what I am upon the rack to know. [*Aside.*] Forgive me, Lopez; I am to blame to speak thus harshly to thee: let this obtain my pardon. [*Gives him money.*] Thou see'st I am disturbed.

Lop. Yes, sir, I see I have been led into a snare; I have said too much.

Car. And yet thou must say more; nothing can lessen my torment, but a farther knowledge of what causes my misery. Speak then! have I any thing to hope?

Lop. Nothing; but that you may be a happier bachelor, than my master may probably be a married man.

Car. Married, say'st thou?

Lop. I did, sir, and I believe he'll say so too in a twelvemonth.

Car. O torment!——But give me more on't: when, how, to whom, where?

Lop. Yesterday to Leonora, by the parson, in the pantry.

Car. Look to it; if this be false, thy life shall pay the torment thou hast given me: be gone.

Lop. With the body and the soul of me. [*Exit* LOPEZ.

San. Base news, master.

Car. Now my insulting rival's smile speaks out: O cursed, cursed woman!

Enter JACINTA.

Jac. I'm come in haste to tell you, sir, that, as soon as the moon's up, my lady will give you a meeting in the close-walk by the back-door of the garden; she thinks she has something to propose to you will certainly get her father's consent to marry you.

Car. Past sufferance! this aggravation is not to be borne: go thank her—with my curses: ay, and let them blast her, while their venom is strong. [*Exit* CAR.

Jac.——Won't you explain? what's this storm for?

San. And darest thou ask me questions, smooth-faced iniquity, crocodile of Nile, siren of the rocks? Go carry back the too gentle answer thou hast received; only let me add with the poet:

We are no fools, trollop, master nor me;
And thy mistress may go—to the devil with thee. [*Exit* SANCHO.

JACINTA *sola.*

Jac. Am I awake!——I fancy not; a very idle dream this. Well, I'll go talk in my sleep to my lady about it; and when I awake, we'll try what interpretation we can make on't. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter CAMILLO *and* ISABELLA.

Isa. How can you doubt my secrecy? have you not proofs of it?

Cam. Nay, I am determined to trust you; but are we safe here? can nobody overhear us?

Isa. Safer much than in a room. Nobody can come within hearing, before we see them.

Cam. And yet how hard 'tis for me to break silence!

Isa. Your secret sure must be of great importance.

Cam. You may be sure it is, when I confess 'tis with regret I own it e'en to you, and were it possible, you should not know it.

Isa. 'Tis frankly owned indeed: but 'tis not kind, perhaps not prudent, after what you know I already am acquainted with. Have not I been bred up with you? and am I ignorant of a secret, which, were it known——

Cam Would be my ruin; I confess it would. I own you know why both my birth and sex are thus disguised; you know how I was taken from my cradle to secure the estate, which had else been lost by young Camillo's death; but which is now safe in my supposed father's hands, by my passing for his son; and 'tis because you know all this, I have resolved to open farther wonders to you. But, before I say any more, you must resolve one doubt, which often gives me great disturbance; whether Don Alvarez ever was himself privy to the mystery which has disguised my sex, and made me pass for his son?

Isa. What you ask me is a thing has often perplexed my thoughts as well as yours, nor could my mother ever resolve the doubt. You know, when that young child Camillo died, in whom was wrapt up so much expectation, from the great estate his uncle's will (even before he came into the world) had left him; his mother made a secret of his death to her husband Alvarez, and readily fell in with a proposal made her to take you, (who then was just Camillo's age,) and bring you up in his room. You have heard how you were then at nurse with my mother, and how your own was privy and consenting to the plot; but Don Alvarez was never let into it by them.

Cam. Don't you then think it probable his wife might after tell him?

Isa. 'Twas ever thought nothing but a death-bed repentance could draw it from her to any one; and that was prevented by the suddenness of her exit to t'other world, which did not give her even time to call Heaven's mercy on her. And yet, now I have said all this, I own the correspondence and friendship I observe he holds with your real mother, gives me some suspicion, and the presents he often makes her (which people seldom do for nothing) confirm it. But since this is all I can say to you on that point, pray let us come to the secret, which you have made me impatient to hear.

Cam. Know then, that though Cupid is blind, he is not to be deceived: I can hide my sex from the world, but not from him: his dart has found the way through the manly garb I wear, to pierce a virgin's tender heart—I love—

Isa. How!

Cam. Nay, ben't surprised at that; I have other wonders for you.

Isa. Quick, let me hear 'em.

Cam. I love Lorenzo.

Isa. Lorenzo! most nicely hit. The very man from whom your imposture keeps this vast estate; and who, on first knowledge of your being a woman, would enter into possession of it. This is indeed a wonder.

Cam. Then wonder farther still—I am his wife.

Isa. Ha! his wife!

Cam. His wife, Isabella; and yet thou hast not all my wonders; I am his wife without his knowledge: he does not even know I am a woman.

Isa. Madam, your humble servant; if you please to go on, I won't interrupt you, indeed I won't.

Cam. Then hear how these strange things have past: Lorenzo, bound unregarded in my sister's chains, seemed in my eyes a conquest worth her care. Nor could I see him treated with contempt, without growing warm in his interest; I blamed Leonora for not being touched with his merit; I blamed her so long, till I grew touched with it myself: and the reasons I urged to vanquish her heart, insensibly made a conquest of my own: 'twas thus, my friend, I fell. What was next to be done my passion pointed out; my heart I felt was warmed to a noble enterprise; I gave it way, and boldly on it led me. Leonora's name and voice, in the dark shades of night, I borrowed to engage the object of my wishes. I met him, Isabella, and so deceived him; he cannot blame me sure, for much I blest him. But, to finish this strange story: in short, I owned I long had loved, but, finding my father most averse to my desires, I at last forced myself to this secret correspondence; I urged the mischiefs would attend the knowledge on't, I urged them so, he thought them full of weight, so yielded to observe what rules I gave him: they were to pass the day with cold indifference, to avoid even signs or looks of intimacy, but gather for the still, the secret night, a flood of love to recompence the losses of the day. I will not trouble you with lovers' cares, nor what contrivances we formed to bring this toying to a solid bliss. Know only, when three nights we thus had passed, the fourth, it was agreed, should make us one for ever; each kept their promise, and last night has joined us.

Isa. Indeed your talents pass my poor extent: you serious ladies are well formed for business; what wretched work a poor coquette had made on't! but still there's that remains will try your skill; you have your man, but——

Cam. Lovers think no farther, the object of that passion possesses all desire; however I have opened to you my wondrous situation. If you can advise me in my difficulties to come, you will. But see——my husband!

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. You look as if you were busy; pray tell me if I interrupt you? I'll retire.

Cam. No, no, you have a right to interrupt us, since you were the subject of our discourse.

Lor. Was I?

Cam. You were; nay, I'll tell you how you entertained us too.

Lor. Perhaps I had as good avoid hearing that.

Cam. You need not fear, it was not to your disadvantage; I was commending you, and saying, if I had been a woman, I had been in danger; nay, I think I said should infallibly have been in love with you.

Lor. While such an if is in the way, you run no great risque in declaring; but you'd be finely catched now, should some wonderful transformation give me a claim to your heart.

Cam. Not sorry for't at all, for I ne'er expect to find a mistress please me half so well as you would do if I were yours.

Lor. Since you are so well inclined to me in your wishes, sir, I suppose (as the fates have ordained it) you would have some pleasure in helping me to a mistress, since you cann't be mine yourself.

Cam. Indeed I should not.

Lor. Then my obligation is but small to you.

Cam. Why, would you have a woman, that is in love with you herself, employ her interest to help you to another?

Lor. No; but you, being no woman, might.

Cam. Sir, 'tis as a woman I say what I do, and I suppose myself a woman when I design all these favours to you: therefore, out of that supposition, I have no other good intentions to you than you may expect from any one that says, he's—sir, your humble servant.

Lor. So, unless Heaven is pleased to work a miracle, and, from a sturdy young fellow, make you a kind-hearted young lady, I'm to get little by your good opinion of me?

Cam. Yes, there is one means yet left (on this side a miracle) that would perhaps engage me, if, with an honest oath, you could declare, were I a woman, I might dispute your heart, even with the first of my pretending sex.

Lor. Then solemnly and honestly I swear, that, had you been a woman, and I the master of the world, I think I should have laid it at your feet.

Cam. Then honestly and solemnly I swear, henceforwards all your interest shall be mine.

Lor. I have a secret to impart to you will quickly try your friendship.

Cam. I have a secret to unfold to you, will put you even to a fiery trial.

Lor. What do you mean, Camillo?

Cam. I mean, that I love where I never durst yet own it; yet, where 'tis in your power to make me the happiest of—

Lor. Explain, Camillo; and be assured, if your happiness is in my power, 'tis in your own.

Cam. Alas! you promise me you know not what.

Lor. I promise nothing but what I will perform; name the person.

Cam. 'Tis one who's very near to you.

Lor. If 'tis my sister, why all this pain in bringing forth the secret?

Cam. Alas! it is your—

Lor. Speak!

Cam. I cannot yet—Farewell.

Lor. Hold! pray speak it now.

Cam. I must not; but when you tell me your secret, you shall know mine.

Lor. Mine is not in my power, without the consent of another.

Cam. Get that consent, and then we'll try who best will keep their oaths.

Lor. I am content.

Cam. And I. Adieu.

Lor. Farewell. [*Exit* LORENZO.

Enter LEONORA *and* JACINTA.

Leo. 'Tis enough: I will revenge myself this way; if it does but torment him, I shall be content to find no other pleasure in it. Brother, you'll wonder at my change; after all my ill usage of Lorenzo, I am determined to be his wife.

Cam. How, sister! so sudden a turn? This inequality of temper indeed is not commendable.

Leo. Your change, brother, is much more justly surprising; you hitherto have pleaded for him strongly, accused me of blindness, cruelty, and pride; and now I yield to your reasons, and resolve in his favour, you blame my compliance, and appear against his interest.

Cam. I quit his service for what's dearer to me, yours. I have learned, from sure intelligence, the attack he made on you was but a feint, and that his heart is in another's chain; I would not therefore see you so exposed, to offer up yourself to one who must refuse you.

Leo. If that be all, leave me my honour to take care of; I am no stranger to his wishes; he won't refuse me, brother, nor I hope will you, to tell him of my resolution; if you do, this moment with my own tongue (through all the virgin's blushes) I'll own to him I am determined in his favour.——You pause as if you'd let the task lie on me.

Cam. Neither on you nor me; I have a reason you are yet a stranger to: know then, there is a virgin, young and tender, whose peace and happiness so much are mine, I cannot see her miserable; she loves him with that torrent of desire, that, were the world resigned her in his stead, she'd still be wretched. I will not pique you to a female strife, by saying you have not charms to

tear him from her; but I would move you to a female softness, by telling you her death would wait your conquest. What I have more to plead is as a brother; I hope that gives me some small interest in you; whatever it is, you see how I'd employ it.

Leo. You never could put it to a harder service; I beg a little time to think: pray leave me to myself a while.

Com. I shall; I only ask that you would think, and then you won't refuse me. [*Exit* CAM.

Jac. Indeed, madam, I'm of your brother's mind, though for another cause; but sure 'tis worth thinking twice on for your own sake: you are too violent.

Leo. A slighted woman knows no bounds. Vengeance is all the cordial she can have, so snatches at the nearest. Ungrateful wretch! to use me with such insolence.

Jac. You see me as much enraged at it, as you are yourself, yet my brain is roving after the cause, for something there must be; never letter was received by man with more passion and transport; I was almost as charming a goddess as yourself, only for bringing it. Yet when, in a moment after, I come with a message worth a dozen on't, never was witch so handled; something must have passed between one and t'other, that's sure.

Leo. Nothing could pass worth my enquiring after, since nothing could happen that can excuse his usage of me. He had a letter under my hand, which owned him master of my heart; and, till I contradicted it with my mouth, he ought not to doubt the truth on't.

Jac. Nay, I confess, madam, I ha'n't a word to say for him; I'm afraid he's but a rogue at bottom, as well as my shameless that attends him: we are bit, by my troth, and haply well enough served, for listening to the glib tongues of the rascals. But be comforted, madam; they'll fall into the hands of some foul sluts or other before they die, that will set our account even with 'em.

Leo. Well; let him laugh, let him glory in what he has done, he shall see I have a spirit can use him as I ought.

Jac. And let one thing be your comfort by the way, madam, that, in spite of all your dear affections to him, you have had the grace to keep him at arm's length. You ha'n't thanked me for it; but, good faith, 'twas well I did not stir out of the chamber that fond night; for there are times the stoutest of us are in danger, the rascals wheedle so.

Leo. In short, my very soul is fired with his treatment; and if ever that perfidious monster should relent, though he should crawl like a poor worm beneath my feet, nay plunge a dagger in his heart, to bleed for pardon, I charge thee strictly, charge thee on thy life, thou do not urge a look to melt me toward him, but strongly buoy me up in brave resentment; and if thou see'st (which heavens avert) a glance of weakness in me, rouse to my memory the vile wrongs I've borne, and blazon them with skill in all their glaring colours.

Jac. Madam, never doubt me; I'm charged to the mouth with fury; and if ever I meet that fat traitor of mine, such a volley will I pour about his ears——Now Heaven prevent all hasty vows: but, in the humour I am, methinks I'd carry my maidenhead to my cold grave with me, before I'd let it simper at the rascal. But soft, here comes your father.

Enter ALVAREZ.

Alv. Leonora, I'd have you retire a little, and send your brother's tutor to me, Metaphrastus. [*Exeunt* LEO. *and* JAC.] I'll try if I can discover, by his tutor, what it is that seems so much to work his brain of late; for something more than common there plainly does appear, yet nothing sure that can disturb his soul like what I have to torture mine upon his account. Sure nothing in this world is worth a troubled mind! What racks has avarice stretched me on! I wanted nothing; kind Heaven had given me a plenteous lot, and seated me in great abundance; why then approve I of this imposture? What have I gained by it? Wealth and misery. I have bartered peaceful days for restless nights; a wretched bargain! and he that merchandises thus, must be undone at last.

Enter METAPHRASTUS.

Met. Mandatum tuum curo diligenter.

Alv. Master, I had a mind to ask you——

Met. The title master, comes from *Magis* and *Ter*, which is as much as to say, thrice worthy.

Alv. I never heard so much before, but it may be true, for aught I know. But, master——

Met. Go on.

Alv. Why so I will if you'll let me, but don't interrupt me then.

Met. Enough, proceed.

Alv. Why then, master, for a third time, my son Camillo gives me much uneasiness of late; you know I love him, and have many careful thoughts about him.

Met. 'Tis true. *Filio non potest præferri nisi filius.*

Alv. Master, when one has business to talk on, these scholastic expressions are not of use; I believe you a great Latinist; possibly you may understand Greek: those who recommend you to me said so, and I am willing it should be true; but the thing I want to discourse you about at present, does not properly give you an occasion to display your learning. Besides, to tell you truth, 'twill at all times be lost upon me; my father was a wise man, but he taught me nothing beyond common sense; I know but one tongue in the world, which luckily being understood by you as well as me, I fancy, whatever thoughts we have to communicate to one another, may reasonably be conveyed in that, without having recourse to the language of Julius Cæsar.

Met. You are wrong, but may proceed.

Alv. I thank you: what is the matter I do not know; but, though it is of the utmost consequence to me to marry my son, what match so-

ever I propose to him, he still finds some pretence or other to decline it.

Met. He is, perhaps, of the humour of a brother of Marcus Tullius, who——

Alv. Dear master, leave the Greeks, and the Latins, and the Scotch, and the Welsh, and let me go on in my business; what have those people to do with my son's marriage?

Met. Again you are wrong; but go on.

Alv. I say then, that I have strong apprehensions, from his refusing all my proposals, that he may have some secret inclination of his own: and, to confirm me in this fear, I yesterday observed him (without his knowing it) in a corner of the grove, where nobody comes—

Met. A place out of the way, you would say; a place of retreat.

Alv. Why, the corner of the grove, where nobody comes, is a place of retreat, is it not?

Met. In Latin, *Secessus.*

Alv. Ha!

Met. As Virgil has it, *Est in secessu locus.*

Alv. How could Virgil have it, when I tell you no soul was there but he and I?

Met. Virgil is a famous author; I quote his saying as a phrase more proper to the occasion than that you use, and not as one who was in the wood with you.

Alv. And I tell you, I hope to be as famous as any Virgil of 'em all, when I have been dead as long, and have no need of a better phrase than my own to tell you my meaning.

Met. You ought, however, to make choice of the words most used by the best authors. *Tu vivendo bonos*, as they say, *Scribendo sequare peritos.*

Alv. Again!

Met. 'Tis Quintilian's own precept.

Alv. Oons——

Met. And he hath something very learned upon it, that may be of service to you to hear.

Alv. You son of a whore, will you hear me speak?

Met. What may be the occasion of this unmanly passion? What is it you would have with me?

Alv. What you might have known an hour ago, if you had pleased.

Met. You would then have me hold my peace?—I shall.

Alv. You will do very well.

Met. You see I do; well, go on.

Alv. Why then, to begin once again, I say my son Camillo——

Met. Proceed; I sha'n't interrupt you.

Alv. I say my son Camillo——

Met. What is it you say of your son Camillo?

Alv. That he has got a dog of a tutor, whose brains I'll beat out, if he won't hear me speak.

Met. That dog is a philosopher, contemns passion, and yet will hear you.

Alv. I don't believe a word on't, but I'll try once again; I have a mind to know from you, whether you have observed any thing in my son——

Met. Nothing that is like his father. Go on.

Alv. Have a care.

Met. I do not interrupt you; but you are long in coming to a conclusion.

Alv. Why, thou hast not let me begin yet.

Met. And yet 'tis high time to have made an end.

Alv. Dost thou know thy danger? I have not ——thus much patience left.

[*Shewing the end of his finger.*

Met. Mine is already consumed. I do not use to be thus treated; my profession is to teach, and not to hear, yet I have hearkened like a school-boy, and am not heard, although a master.

Alv. Get out of the room.

Met. I will not. If the mouth of a wise man be shut, he is, as it were, a fool; for who shall know his understanding? therefore a certain philosopher said well, Speak, that thou mayest be known; great talkers, without knowledge, are as the winds that whistle; but they who have learning, should speak aloud. If this be not permitted, we may expect to see the whole order of nature overthrown; hens devour foxes, and lambs destroy wolves, nurses suck children, and children give suck; generals mend stockings, and chambermaids take towns: we may expect, I say——

Alv. That, and that, and that, and——

[*Strikes him, and kicks him; and then follows him off with a bell at his ear.*

Met. *O Tempora! O Mores!*

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter LOPEZ.

Lop. Sometimes fortune seconds a bold design, and when folly has brought us into a trap, impudence brings us out on't. I have been caught by this hot-headed lover here, and have told like a puppy what I shall be beaten for like a dog. Come! Courage, my dear Lopez! Fire will fetch out fire: Thou hast told one body thy master's secret, e'en tell it to half a dozen more, and try how that will thrive; go tell it to the two old dons, the lovers' fathers. The thing's done, and cann't be retrieved; perhaps they may lay their two ancient heads together, club a penny-worth of wisdom a-piece, and, with great penetration, at last find out, that 'tis best to submit.

where 'tis not in their power to do otherwise. This being resolved, there's no time to be lost.

[*Knocks at* ALVAREZ'S *door.*

Alv. [*Within.*] Who knocks?

Lop. Lopez.

Alv. [*Looking out.*] What dost want?

Lop. To bid you good morrow, sir.

Alv. Well, good morrow to thee again.

[*Retires.*

Lop. What a——I think he does not care for my company. [*Knocks again.*

Alv. [*Within.*] Who knocks?

Lop. Lopez.

Alv. [*Looking out.*] What would'st have?

Lop. My old master, sir, gives his service to you, and desires to know how you do.

Alv. How I do? Why well: How should I do? Service to him again. [*Retires.*

Lop. Sir.

Alv. [*Returning.*] What the deuce wouldst thou have with me, with thy good morrows and thy services?

Lop. This man does not understand good breeding, I find. [*Aside.*] Why, sir, my master has some very earnest business with you.

Alv. Business! About what? What business can he have with me?

Lop. I don't know, truly; but 'tis some very important matter: he has just now (as I hear) discovered some great secret, which he must needs talk with you about.

Alv. Ha! A secret, sayest thou?

Lop. Yes; and bid me bring him word, if you were at home, he'd be with you presently. Sir, your humble servant. [*Exit* LOPEZ.

ALVAREZ *enters.*

A secret: and must speak with me about it! Heavens, how I tremble! What can this message mean? I have very little acquaintance with him; what business can he have with me? An important secret 'twas, he said, and that he had just discovered it. Alas! I have in the world but one, if it be that——I'm lost; an eternal blot must fix upon me. How unfortunate am I, that I have not followed the honest counsels of my heart, which have often urged me to set my conscience at ease, by rendering to him the estate that is his due, and which, by a foul imposture, I keep from him. But 'tis now too late; my villainy is out, and I shall not only be forced with shame to restore him what is his, but shall be perhaps condemned to make him reparation with my own. O terrible view!

Enter Don FELIX.

Fel. My son to go and marry her without her father's knowledge! This can never end well. I don't know what to do; he'll conclude I was privy to it, and his power and interest are so great at court, he may, with ease, contrive my ruin: I tremble at his sending to speak with me——Mercy on me, there he is. [*Aside.*

Alv. Ah! shield me, kind Heaven! there's Don Felix come: how I am struck with the sight of him! O the torment of a guilty mind! [*Aside.*

Fel. What shall I say to soften him? [*Aside.*

Alv. How shall I look him in the face? [*Aside.*

Fel. 'Tis impossible he can forgive it. [*Aside.*

Alv. To be sure he'll expose me to the whole world. [*Aside.*

Fel. I see his countenance change. [*Aside.*

Alv. With what contempt he looks upon me! [*Aside.*

Fel. I see, Don Alvarez, by the disorder of your face, you are but too well informed of what brings me here.

Alv. 'Tis true.

Fel. The news may well surprise you; 'tis what I have been far from apprehending.

Alv. Wrong, very wrong, indeed.

Fel. This action is certainly to the last point to be condemned, and I think nobody should pretend to excuse the guilty.

Alv. They are not to be excused, though Heaven may have mercy.

Fel. That's what I hope you will consider.

Alv. We should act as Christians.

Fel. Most certainly.

Alv. Let mercy then prevail.

Fel. It is indeed of heavenly birth.

Alv. Generous Don Felix!

Fel. Too indulgent Alvarez!

Alv. I thank you on my knee.

Fel. 'Tis I ought to have been there first. [*They kneel.*

Alv. Is it then possible we are friends?

Fel. Embrace me to confirm it. [*They embrace.*

Alv. Thou best of men!

Fel. Unlook'd-for bounty!

Alv. Did you know the torment [*Rising.*] this unhappy action has given me——

Fel. 'Tis impossible it could do otherwise; nor has my trouble been less.

Alv. But let my misfortune be kept secret.

Fel. Most willingly; my advantage is sufficient by it, without the vanity of making it public to the world.

Alv. Incomparable goodness! that I should thus have wronged a man so worthy! [*Aside.*] My honour then is safe?

Fel. For ever, even for ever, let it be a secret; I am content.

Alv. Noble gentleman! [*Aside.*] As to what advantages ought to accrue to you by it, it shall be all to your entire satisfaction.

Fel. Wonderful bounty! [*Aside.*] As to that, Don Alvarez, I leave it entirely to you, and shall be content with whatever you think reasonable.

Alv. I thank you, from my soul I must, you know I must——This must be an angel, not a man. [*Aside.*

Fel. The thanks lie on my side, Alvarez, for this unexpected generosity; but may all faults be forgot, and Heaven ever prosper you!

Alv. The same prayer I, with a double fervour, offer up for you.

Fel. Let us then once more embrace, and be forgiveness sealed for ever.

Alv. Agreed; thou best of men, agreed.

[*They embrace.*

Fel. This thing then being thus happily terminated, let me own to you, Don Alvarez, I was in extreme apprehensions of your utmost resentment on this occasion; for I could not doubt but you had formed more happy views in the disposal of so fair a daughter as Leonora, than my poor son's inferior fortune e'er can answer; but since they are joined, and that——

Alv. Ha!

Fel. Nay, 'tis very likely to discourse of it may not be very pleasing to you, though your Christianity and natural goodness have prevailed on you so generously to forgive it. But to do justice to Leonora, and screen her from your too harsh opinion in this unlucky action, 'twas that cunning wicked creature that attends her, who, by unusual arts, wrought her to this breach of duty; for her own inclinations were disposed to all the modesty and resignation a father could ask from a daughter. My son I cann't excuse, but since your bounty does so, I hope you'll quite forget the fault of the less guilty Leonora.

Alv. What a mistake have I lain under here? and from a groundless apprehension of one misfortune, find myself in the certainty of another.

[*Aside.*

Fel. He looks disturb'd; what can this mean?

[*Aside.*

Alv. My daughter married to his son!——Confusion! But I find myself in such unruly agitation, something wrong may happen if I continue with him; I'll therefore leave him. [*Aside.*

Fel. You seem thoughtful, sir, I hope there's no——

Alv. A sudden disorder I am seized with; you'll pardon me; I must retire.

[*Exit* ALVAREZ.

Don FELIX *solus.*

I don't like this—He went oddly off—I doubt he finds this bounty difficult to go through with. His natural resentment is making an attack upon his acquired generosity: pray Heaven it be not too strong for it. The misfortune is a great one, and cann't but touch him nearly. It was not natural to be so calm: I wish it don't yet drive him to my ruin. But here comes this young hot-brained coxcomb, who, with his midnight amours, has been the cause of all this mischief to me.

Enter LORENZO.

So, sir, you are come to receive my thanks for your noble exploit? You think you have done bravely now. Ungracious offspring, to bring perpetual troubles on me! Must there never pass a day, but I must drink some bitter potion or other of your preparation for me?

Lor. I am amazed, sir: Pray what have I done to deserve your anger?

Fel. Nothing; no manner of thing in the world, nor never do. I am an old testy fellow, and am always scolding, and finding fault for nothing; complaining that I have got a coxcomb of a son, that makes me weary of my life; fancying he perverts the order of nature, turning day into night, and night into day; getting whims in my brain, that he consumes his life in idleness, unless he rouses now and then to do some noble stroke of mischief; and having an impertinent dream at this time, that he has been making the fortune of the family, by an under-hand marriage with the daughter of a man who will crush us all to powder for it. Ah——ungracious wretch, to bring an old man into all this trouble! The pain thou gavest thy mother to bring thee into the world, and the plague thou hast given me to keep thee here, make the getting thee (though 'twas in our honey-moon) a bitter remembrance to us both.

[*Exit Don* FELIX.

LORENZO *solus.*

So—all's out—Here's a noble storm arising, and I'm at sea in a cock-boat. But which way could this business reach him? By this traitor Lopez—it must be so; it could be no other way; for only he, and the priest that married us, knew of it. The villain will never confess though. I must try a little address with him, and conceal my anger. O, here he comes.

Enter LOPEZ.

Lor. Lopez!

Lop. Do you call, sir?

Lor. I find all's discovered to my father; the secret's out; he knows my marriage.

Lop. He knows your marriage? How the pest should that happen? Sir, 'tis impossible, that's all.

Lor. I tell thee 'tis true; he knows every particular of it.

Lop. He does!——Why then, sir, all I can say is, that Satan and he are better acquainted than the devil and a good Christian ought to be.

Lor. Which way he has discovered it, I cann't tell, nor am I much concerned to know, since, beyond all my expectations, I find him perfectly easy at it, and ready to excuse my fault with better reasons than I can find to do it myself.

Lop. Say you so?——I am very glad to hear that; then all's safe. [*Aside.*

Lor. 'Tis unexpected good fortune; but it could never proceed purely from his own temper; there must have been pains taken with him to bring him to this calm: I'm sure I owe much to the bounty of some friend or other: I wish I knew where my obligation lay, that I might acknowledge it as I ought.

Lop. Are you thereabouts, i'faith? Then sharp's the word. 'Egad, I'll own the thing, and receive his bounty for it. [*Aside.*] Why, sir——not that I pretend to make a merit o' the matter, for, alas! I am but your poor hireling, and therefore bound in duty to render you all the service I can——but——'tis I have done it.

Lor. What hast thou done?

Lop. What no man else could have done—the

job, sir; told him the secret, and then talked him into a liking on't.

Lor. 'Tis impossible; thou dost not tell me true.

Lop. Sir, I scorn to reap any thing from another man's labours; but if this poor piece of service carries any merit with it, you now know where to reward it.

Lor. Thou art not serious?

Lop. I am, or may hunger be my messmate.

Lor. And may famine be mine, if I don't reward thee for't as thou deservest——dead.

[*Making a pass at him.*

Lop. Have a care there. [*Leaping on one side.*] What do you mean, sir? I bar all surprise.

Lor. Traitor! Is this the fruit of the trust I placed in thee—villain?

[*Making another thrust at him.*

Lop. Take heed, sir; you'll do one a mischief before you're aware.

Lor. What recompence can'st thou make me, wretch, for this piece of treachery? Thy sordid blood cann't expiate the thousandth——But I'll have it, however. [*Thrusts again.*

Lop. Look you there again. Pray, sir, be quiet. Is the devil in you? 'Tis bad jesting with edged tools. 'Egad, that last push was within an inch o' me. I don't know what you make all this bustle about, but I'm sure I've done all for the best, and I believe it will prove for the best too at last, if you'll have but a little patience. But if gentlemen will be in their airs in a moment—Why, what the deuce——I'm sure I have been as eloquent as Cicero in your behalf, and I don't doubt to good purpose too, if you'll give things time to work. But nothing but foul language and naked swords about the house, sa, sa: run you through, you dog!—why, nobody can do business at this rate.

Lor. And suppose your project fails, and I'm ruined by it, sir.

Lop. Why, 'twill be time enough to kill me then, sir, won't it? What should you do it for now? Besides, I a'n't ready; I'm not prepared; I might be undone by it.

Lor. But what will Leonora say to her marriage being known, wretch?

Lop. Why, may be she'll draw——her sword too. [*Shewing his tongue.*] But all shall be well with you both, if you will but let me alone.

Lor. Peace: here's her father.

Lop. That's well: we shall see how things go presently.

Enter Don ALVAREZ.

Alv. The more I recover from the disorder this discourse has put me in, the more strange the whole adventure appears to me. Leonora maintains there is not a word of truth in what I have heard; that she knows nothing of the marriage: And indeed she tells me this with such a naked air of sincerity, that, for my part, I believe her. What then must be their project? Some villainous intention, to be sure, though which way, I yet am ignorant. But here's the bridegroom; I'll accost him.——I am told, sir, you take upon you to scandalize my daughter, and tell idle tales of what can never happen.

Lop. Now methinks, sir, if you treated your son-in-law with a little more civility, things might go just as well in the main.

Alv. What means this insolent fellow by my son-in-law? I suppose 'tis you, villain, are the author of this impudent story.

Lop. You seem angry, sir——perhaps without cause.

Alv. Cause, traitor! Is a cause wanting where a daughter's defamed, and a noble family scandalized?

Lop. There he is; let him answer you.

Alv. I should be glad he'd answer me, why, if he had any desires to my daughter, he did not make his approaches like a man of honour.

Lop. Yes; and so have had the doors bolted against him, like a house-breaker. [*Aside.*

Lor. Sir, to justify my proceeding, I have little to say; but to excuse it, I have much; if any allowance may be made to a passion, which, in your youth, you have yourself been sway'd by. I love your daughter to that excess——

Alv. You would undo her for a night's lodging.

Lor. Undo her, sir?

Alv. Yes, that's the word. You knew it was against her interest to marry you, therefore you endeavoured to win her to't in private; you knew her friends would make a better bargain for her, therefore you kept your designs from their knowledge; and yet you love her to that excess——

Lor. I'd readily lay down my life to serve her.

Alv. Could you readily lay down fifty thousand pistoles to serve her, your excessive love would come with better credentials: An offer of life is very proper for the attack of a counterscarp, but a thousand ducats will sooner carry a lady's heart: You are a young man, but will learn this when you are older.

Lop. But since things have succeeded better this once, sir, and that my master will prove a most incomparable good husband, (for that he'll do, I'll answer for him,) and that 'tis too late to recal what's already done, sir——

Alv. What's done, villain?

Lop. Sir, I mean, that since my master and my lady are married, and——

Alv. Thou liest; they are not married.

Lop. Sir!——I say, that since they are married, and that they love each other so passing dearly, indeed, I fancy that——

Alv. Why, this impudence is beyond all bearing. Sir, do you put your rascal upon this?

Lor. Sir, I am in a wood; I don't know what it is you mean.

Alv. And I am in a plain, sir, and think I may be understood. Do you pretend you are married to my daughter?

Lor. Sir, 'tis my happiness on one side, as it is my misfortune on another.

Alv. And do you think this idle project can succeed? Do you believe your affirming you are mar-

ried to her will induce both her and me to consent it shall be so.

Lop. Sir, I see you make my master almost out of his wits to hear you talk so; but I, who am but a stander-by now, as I was at the wedding, have mine about me, and desire to know whether you think this project can succeed? Do you believe your affirming they are not married will induce both him and I to give up the lady? One short question to bring this matter to an issue. Why do you think they are not married?

Alv. Because she utterly renounces it.

Lop. And so she will her religion, if you attack it with that dreadful face. D'ye hear, sir? The poor lady is in love heartily, and I wish all poor ladies that are so would dispose of themselves so well as she has done; but you scare her out of her senses. Bring her here into the room; speak gently to her; tell her you know the thing is done; that you have it from a man of honour—me; that may be you wish it had been otherwise, but are a Christian, and profess mercy, and therefore have resolved to pardon her: Say this, and I shall appear a man of reputation, and have satisfaction made me.

Alv. Or an impudent rogue, and have all your bones broke.

Lop. Content.

Alv. Agreed.—Leonora! Who's there? Call Leonora.

Lop. All will go rarely, sir; we shall have shot the gulf in a moment. [*Aside to* LORENZO.

Enter LEONORA.

Alv. Come hither, Leonora.

Lop. So, now we shall see.

Alv. I called you to answer for yourself; here's a strong claim upon you; if there be any thing in the pretended title, conceal it no farther; it must be known at last; it may as well be so now. Nothing is so uneasy as uncertainty; I would therefore be gladly freed from it. If you have done what I am told you have, 'tis a great fault indeed; but as I fear 'twill carry much of its punishment along with it, I shall rather reduce my resentment into mourning your misfortune, than suffer it to add to your affliction; therefore speak the truth.

Lop. Well, this is fair play: now I speak, sir. You see, fair lady, the goodness of a tender father; nothing need therefore hinder you from owning a most loving husband. We had like to have been altogether by the ears about this business, and pails of blood were ready to run about the house; but, thank Heaven, the sun shines out again, and one word from your sweet mouth makes fair weather for ever. My master has been forced to own your marriage; he begs you'll do so too.

Leo. What does this impudent rascal mean?

Lop. Ha!——Madam!

Leo. Sir, I should be very glad to know [*To* LORENZO] what can have been the occasion of this wild report; sure you cannot be yourself a party in it.

Lop. He, he!

Lor. Forgive me, dear Leonora: I know you had strong reasons for the secret being longer kept; but 'tis not my fault our marriage is disclosed.

Leo. Our marriage, sir!

Lor. 'Tis known, my dear, though much against my will; but since it is so, 'twould be in vain for us to deny it any longer.

Leo. Then, sir, I am your wife? I fell in love with you, and married you without my father's knowledge?

Lor. I dare not be so vain to think 'twas love; I humbly am content to owe the blessing to your generosity: you saw the pains I suffered for your sake, and in compassion eased 'em.

Leo. I did, sir! Sure this exceeds all human impudence.

Lop. Truly I think it does. She'd make an incomparable actress. [*Aside.*

Lor. I begin to be surprised, madam, at your carrying things so far; you see there's no occasion for it; and for the discovery, I have already told you, 'twas not my fault.

Lop. My master's! No, 'twas I did it. Why, what a bustle's here! I knew things would go well, and so they do, if folks would but let 'em. But if ladies will be in their merriments, when gentlemen are upon serious business, why, what a deuce can one say to 'em?

Leo. I see this fellow is to be an evidence in your plot; where you hope to drive, it is hard to guess; for if any thing can exceed its impudence, it is its folly. A noble stratagem indeed to win a lady by! I could be diverted with it, but that I see a face of villainy requires a rougher treatment: I could almost, methinks, forget my sex, and be my own avenger.

Lor. Madam, I am surprised beyond all——

Lop. Pray, sir, let me come to her; you are so surprised, you'll make nothing on't: She wants a little snubbing. Look you, madam, I have seen many a pleasant humour amongst ladies, but you out-cut them all. Here's contradiction with a vengeance: You ha'n't been married eight-and-forty hours, and you are slap——at your husband's beard already: Why, do you consider who he is?——Who this gentleman is? And what he can do——by law? Why, he can lock you up—knock you down—tie you neck and heels.

Lor. Forbear, you insolent villain you.

[*Offering to strike him.*

Leo. That—for what's past, however.

[*Giving him a box on the ear.*

Lop. I think—she gave me a box o' the ear; ha! [*Exit* LEONORA.

Sir, will you suffer your old servants to be used thus by new comers? It's a shame, a mere shame. Sir, will you take a poor dog's advice for once? She denies she's married to you: take her at her word; you have seen some of her humours—— let her go.

Alv. Well, gentlemen, thus far you see I have heard all with patience; have you content? Or how much farther do you design to go with this business?

Lop. Why, truly, sir, I think we are near at a stand.

Alv. 'Tis time, you villain you.

Lop. Why, and I am a villain now, if every word I've spoke be not as true as——as the Gazette: And your daughter's no better than a——a——a whimsical young woman, for making disputes among gentlemen. And if every body had their deserts, she'd have a good—I won't speak out, to inflame reckonings; but let her go, master.

Alv. Sir, I don't think it well to spend any more words with your impudent and villainous servant here.

Lop. Thank you, sir: but I'd let her go.

Alv. Nor have I more to say to you than this, that you must not think so daring an affront to my family can go long unresented. Farewell.

[*Exit* ALV.

Lor. Well, sir, what have you to say for yourself now?

Lop. Why, sir, I have only to say, that I am a very unfortunate——middle-aged man; and that I believe all the stars upon heaven and earth have been concerned in my destiny. Children now unborn will hereafter sing my downfal in mournful lines, and notes of doleful tune: I am at present troubled in mind; despair around me, signified in appearing gibbets, with a great bundle of dog-whips, by way of preparation.

I therefore will go seek some mountain high,
If high enough some mountain may be found,
With distant valley dreadfully profound,
And from the horrid cliff—look calmly all around.
Farewell. [*Aside.*

Lor. No, sirrah, I'll see your wretched end myself. Die here, villain. [*Drawing his sword.*

Lop. I can't, sir, if any body looks upon me.

Lor. Away, you trifling wretch; but think not to escape, for thou shalt have thy recompence.

[*Exit* LORENZO.

LOPEZ *solus.*

Why, what a mischievous jade is this, to make such an uproar in a family the first day of her marriage! Why, my master won't so much as get a honey-moon out of her. 'Egad, let her go. If she be thus in her soft and tender youth, she'll be rare company at threescore. Well, he may do as he pleases, but were she my dear, I'd let her go——such a foot at her tail, I'd make the truth bounce out at her mouth, like a pellet out of a pot-gun. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter CAMILLO *and* ISABELLA.

Isa. 'Tis an unlucky accident indeed.

Cam. Ah, Isabella! Fate has now determined my undoing. This thing can ne'er end here; Leonora and Lorenzo must soon come to some explanation; the dispute is too monstrous to pass over without farther inquiry, which must discover all, and what will be the consequence, I tremble at; for whether Don Alvarez knows of the imposture, or whether he is deceived, with the rest of the world, when once it breaks out, and the consequence is the loss of that great wealth he now enjoys by it, what must become of me? All paternal affections then must cease, and regarding me as an unhappy instrument in the trouble which will then o'erload him, he will return me to my humble birth, and then I'm lost for ever. For what, alas! will the deceived Lorenzo say? A wife with neither fortune, birth, nor beauty, instead of one most plenteously endowed with all. O, Heavens! what a sea of misery I have before me!

Isa. Indeed you reason right, but these reflections are ill-timed; why did you not employ them sooner?

Cam. Because I loved.

Isa. And don't you do so now?

Cam. I do, and therefore 'tis I make these cruel just reflections.

Isa. So that love, I find, can do any thing.

Cam. Indeed it can: Its powers are wondrous great, its pains no tongue can tell, its bliss no heart conceive; crowns cannot recompence its torments, Heaven scarce supplies its joys. My stake is of this value: Oh, counsel me how I shall save it.

Isa. Alas! that counsel's much beyond my wisdom's force: I see no way to help you.

Cam. And yet 'tis sure there's one.

Isa. What?

Cam. Death.

Isa. There possibly may be another. I have a thought this moment——perhaps there's nothing in it; yet a small passage comes to my remembrance, that I regarded little when it happened—I'll go and search for one may be of service. But hold; I see Don Carlos: He'll but disturb us now; let us avoid him.

[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* ISABELLA.

Enter Don CARLOS *and* SANCHO.

Car. Repulsed again! This is not to be borne. What though this villain's story be a falsehood: was I to blame to hearken to it? This usage cannot be supported. How was it she treated thee?

San. Never was ambassador worse received. Madam, my master asks ten thousand pardons, and humbly begs one moment's interview.—Be gone, you rascal you. Madam, what answer shall I give my master?—Tell him he's a villain. Indeed, fair lady, I think this is hasty treatment.

—Here, my footmen, toss me this fellow out at the window; and away she went to her devotions.

Car. Did you see Jacinta?

San. Yes; she saluted me with half-a-score rogues and rascals too. I think our destinies are much alike, sir: And, o' my conscience, a couple of scurvy jades we are hampered with.

Car. Ungrateful woman, to receive with such contempt so quick a return of a heart so justly alarmed!

San. Ha, ha, ha!

Car. What, no allowance to be made to the first transports of a lover's fury, when roused by so dreadful an appearance? As just as my suspicions were, have I long suffered them to arraign her?

San. No.

Car. Have I waited for oaths or imprecations to clear her?

San. No.

Car. Nay, even now, is not the whole world still in suspence about her, whilst I alone concluded her innocent?

San. 'Tis very true.

Car. She might, methinks, through this profound respect observe a flame another would have cherished; she might support me against groundless fears, and save me from a rival's tyranny; she might release me from these cruel racks, and would, no doubt, if she could love as I do.

San. Ha, ha, ha!

Car. But since she don't, what do I whining here? Curse on the base humilities of love.

San. Right.

Car. Let children kiss the rod that fleas them, let dogs lie down and lick the shoe that spurns them.

San. Ay.

Car. I am a man, by nature meant for power; the scepter's given us to wield, and we betray our trust whenever we meanly lay it at a woman's feet.

San. True, we are men; hoo——Come, master, let us both be in a passion: here's my sceptre: [*Shewing a cudgel:*] subject Jacinta, look about you. Sir, was you ever in Muscovy? The women there love the men dearly: Why? because ——[*Shaking his stick*]——there's your love-powder for you. Ah, sir, were we but wise and stout, what work should we make with them! But this humble love-making spoils them all. A rare way indeed to bring matters about with them: we are persuading them all day they are angels and goddesses, in order to use them at night like human creatures: we are like to succeed, truly.

Car. For my part, I never yet could bear a slight from any thing, nor will I now. There's but one way, however, to resent it from a woman, and that's to drive her bravely from your heart, and place a worthier in her vacant throne.

San. Now, with submission to my betters, I have another way, sir: I'll drive my tyrant from my heart, and place myself in her throne. Yes, I will be lord of my own tenement, and keep my household in order. Would you would do so too, master; for, look you, I have been servitor in a college at Salamanca, and read philosophy with the doctors; where I found, that a woman, in all times, has been observed to be an animal hard to understand, and much inclined to mischief. Now, as an animal is always an animal, and a captain always a captain, so a woman is always a woman: Whence it is that a certain Greek says, her head is like a bank of sand; or, as another, a solid rock; or, according to a third, a dark lanthorn. Pray, sir, observe, for this is close reasoning; and so as the head is the head of the body, and that the body without a head is like a head without a tail, and that where there is neither head nor tail, 'tis a very strange body; so I say a woman is, by comparison, do you see, (for nothing explains things like comparisons;) I say, by comparison, as Aristotle has often said before me, one may compare her to the raging sea; for as a sea, when the wind rises, knits its brows like an angry bull, and that waves mount upon rocks, and rocks mount upon waves; that porpusses leap like trouts, and whales skip about like gudgeons; that ships roll like beer-barrels, and mariners pray like saints; just so, I say, a woman——a woman, I say, just so, when her reason is shipwrecked upon her passion, and the hulk of her understanding lies thumping against the rock of her fury; then it is, I say, that by certain emotions, which——um——cause, as one may suppose, a sort of convulsive——yes——hurricanious——um——like——in short, a woman is like the devil.

Car. Admirably reasoned indeed, Sancho.

San. Pretty well, I thank Heaven: but here come the crocodiles, to weep us into mercy.

Enter LEONORA *and* JACINTA.

Master, let us shew ourselves men, and leave their briny tears to wash their dirty faces.

Car. It is not in the power of charms to move me.

San. Nor me, I hope; and yet I fear those eyes will look out sharp to snatch up such a prize. [*Pointing to* JACINTA.

Jac. He's coming to us, madam, to beg pardon; but sure you'll never grant it him.

Leo. If I do, may Heaven ne'er grant me mine.

Jac. That's brave.

Car. You look, madam, upon me, as if you thought I came to trouble you with my usual importunities: I'll ease you of that pain, by telling you, my business now is calmly to assure you, but I assure it you with heaven and hell for seconds; for may the joys of one fly from me, whilst the pains of t'other overtake me, if all your charms displayed e'er shake my resolution: I'll never see you more.

San. Bon.

Leo. You are a man of that nice honour, sir, I know you'll keep your word: I expected this assurance from you, and came this way only to thank you for it.

Jac. Very well.

Car. You did, imperious dame, you did? How base is woman's pride! How wretched are the

ingredients it is formed of! If you saw cause for just disdain, why did you not at first repulse me? Why lead a slave in chains that could not grace your triumphs? If I am thus to be contemned, think on the favours you have done the wretch, and hide your face for ever.

San. Well argued.

Leo. I own you have hit the only fault the world can charge me with: the favours I have done to you, I am indeed ashamed of; but since women have their frailties, you'll allow me mine.

Car. 'Tis well, extremely well, madam. I'm happy, however, you at last speak frankly. I thank you for it; from my soul I thank you; but don't expect me grovelling at your feet again; don't; for if I do——

Leo. You will be treated as you deserve; trod upon.

Car. Give me patience;——but I don't want it; I am calm. Madam, farewell; be happy, if you can; by Heavens, I wish you so; but never spread your net for me again; for if you do——

Leo. You'll be running into it.

Car. Rather run headlong into fire and flames; rather be torn with pincers bit from bit; rather be broiled like martyrs upon gridirons——But I am wrong; this sounds like passion, and Heaven can tell I am not angry. Madam, I think we have no farther business together: your most humble servant.

Leo. Farewell t'ye, sir.

Car. Come along. [*To* SANCHO.

[*Goes to the scene, and returns.*

Yet once more, before I go, (lest you should doubt my resolution;) may I starve, perish, rot, be blasted, dead, damned, or any other thing that men or gods can think on, if, on any occasion whatever, civil or military, pleasure or business, love or hate, or any other accident of life, I, from this moment, change one word or look with you.

[*Going off,* SANCHO *claps him on the back.*

Leo. Content. Come away, Jacinta.

CARLOS *returns.*

Car. Yet one word, madam, if you please: I have a little thing here belongs to you; a foolish bauble I once was fond of. [*Twitching her picture from his breast.*] Will you accept a trifle from your servant?

Leo. Willingly, sir. I have a bauble too I think you have some claim to; you'll wear it for my sake.

[*Breaks a bracelet from her arm, and gives it him.*

Car. Most thankfully. This too I should restore you; it once was yours——[*Giving her a table-book.*] By your favour, madam—there is a line or two in it, I think you did me once the honour to write with your own fair hand. Here it is. [*Reads.*

You love me, Carlos, and would know
The secret movements of my heart:
Whether I give you mine or no,
With yours, methinks, I'd never, never part.

Thus you have encouraged me, and thus you have deceived me.

San. Very true.

Leo. I have some faithful lines too; I think I can produce 'em.

[*Pulls out a table-book, reads, and then gives it him.*

How long soe'er, to sigh in vain,
My destiny may prove,
My fate (in spite of your disdain)
Will let me glory in your chain,
And give me leave eternally to love.

There, sir, take your poetry again.

[*Throwing it at his feet.*

'Tis not much the worse for my wearing; 'twill serve again upon a fresh occasion.

Jac. Well done.

Car. I believe I can return the present, madam, with——a pocketful of your prose—— There——

[*Throwing a handful of letters at her feet.*

Leo. Jacinta, give me his letters. There, sir, not to be behind-hand with you.

[*Takes a handful of his letters out of a box, and throws them in his face.*

Jac. And there, and there, and there, sir.

[JACINTA *throws the rest at him.*

San. 'Cods my life, we want ammunition; but for a shift——There, and there, you saucy slut you. [SANCHO *pulls a pack of dirty cards out of his pocket, and throws them at her; then they close; he pulls off her head-clothes, and she his wig, and then part, she running to her mistress, he to his master.*

Jac. I think, madam, we have clearly the better on't.

Leo. For a proof, I resolve to keep the field.

Jac. Have a care he don't rally and beat you yet though: Pray walk off.

Leo. Fear nothing.

San. How the armies stand and gaze at one another after the battle! What think you, sir, of shewing yourself a great general, by making an honourable retreat?

Car. I scorn it. Oh, Leonora! Leonora! a heart like mine should not be treated thus.

Leo. Carlos! Carlos! I have not deserved this usage.

Car. Barbarous Leonora! But 'tis useless to reproach you: she that is capable of what you have done, is formed too cruel ever to repent of it. Go on then, tyrant; make your bliss complete; torment me still; for still, alas! I love enough to be tormented.

Leo. Ah, Carlos! little do you know the tender movements of that thing you name: the heart where love presides admits no thought against the honour of its ruler.

Car. 'Tis not to call that honour into doubt, if, conscious of our own unworthiness, we interpret every frown to our destruction.

Leo. When jealousy proceeds from such humble apprehensions, it shews itself with more respect than yours has done.

Car. And where a heart is guiltless, it easily forgives a greater crime.

Leo. Forgiveness is not now in our debate: if both have been in fault, 'tis fit that both should suffer for it; our separation will do justice on us.

Car. But since we are ourselves the judges of our crimes, what if we should inflict a gentler punishment?

Leo. 'Twould but encourage us to sin again.

Car. And if it should———

Leo. 'Twould give a fresh occasion for the pleasing exercise of mercy.

Car. Right: and so we act the part of earth and heaven together, of men and gods, and taste of both their pleasures.

Leo. The banquet's too inviting to refuse it.

Car. Then thus let us fall on, and feed upon't for ever.

[*Carries her off, embracing her, and kissing her hand.*

Jac. Ah, woman! foolish, foolish woman!

San. Very foolish, indeed.

Jac. But don't expect I'll follow her example.

San. You would, Mopsy, if I'd let you.

Jac. I'd sooner tear my eyes out! Ah——that she had a little of my spirit in her.

San. I believe I shall find thou hast a great deal of her flesh, my charmer; but it won't do; I am all rock, hard rock, very marble.

Jac. A very pumice stone, you rascal you, if one would try thee; but to prevent thy humilities, and shew thee all submission would be vain; to convince thee thou hast nothing but misery and despair before thee, here——take back thy paltry thimble, and be in my debt for the shirts I have made thee with it.

San. Nay, if y'are at that sport, mistress, I believe I shall lose nothing by the balance of thy presents. There, take thy tobacco-stopper, and stop thy———

Jac. Here——take thy sattin pin cushion, with thy curious half hundred of pins in't, thou mad'st such a vapouring about yesterday: tell them carefully; there's not one wanting.

San. There's thy ivory-hafted knife again; whet it well; 'tis so blunt, 'twill cut nothing but love.

Jac. And there's thy pretty pocket scissars thou hast honoured me with; they'll cut off a leg or an arm; Heaven bless them.

San. Here's the enchanted handkerchief you were pleased to endear with your precious blood, when the violence of your love at dinner, t'other day, made you cut your fingers.——There.

[*Blows his nose in it, and gives it her.*

Jac. The rascal so provokes me, I won't even keep his paltry garters from him. Do you see these, you pitiful beggarly scoundrel you?——There, take 'em, there.

[*She takes her garters off, and slaps them about his face.*

San. I have but one thing more of thine. [*Shewing his cudgel.*] I own 'tis the top of all thy presents, and might be useful to me; but that thou may'st have nothing to upbraid me with, e'en take it again with the rest of them.

[*Lifting it up to strike her, she leaps about his neck.*

Jac. Ah, cruel Sancho!—Now beat me, Sancho; do.

San. Rather, like Indian beggars, beat my precious self.

[*Throws away his stick, and embraces her.*

Rather let infants blood about the streets,
Rather let all the wine about the cellar,
Rather let——Oh, Jacinta——thou hast o'ercome.
How foolish are the great resolves of man!
Resolves which we neither would keep, nor can.
When those bright eyes in kindness please to shine,
Their goodness I must needs return with mine:
Bless my Jacinta in her Sancho's arms——

Jac. And I my Sancho with Jacinta's charms.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter LOPEZ.

As soon as it is night, says my master to me, though it cost me my life, I'll enter Leonora's lodgings; therefore make haste, Lopez, prepare every thing necessary—three pair of pocket pistols, two wide-mouthed blunderbusses, some six ells of sword-blade, and a couple of dark lanthorns. When my master said this to me, Sir, said I to my master, (that is, I would have said it, if I had not been in such a fright, I could say nothing; however, I'll say it to him now, and shall probably have a quiet hearing;) look you, sir, by dint of reason, I intend to confound you. You are resolved, you say, to get into Leonora's lodgings, though the devil stand in the door-way? ——Yes, Lopez, that's my resolution.——Very well, and what do you intend to do when you are there?——Why, what an injured man should do—make her sensible of——Make her sensible of a pudding: don't you see she's a jade? She'll raise the house about your ears, arm the whole family, and set the great dog at you.——Were there legions of devils to repulse me, in such a cause I could disperse them all.——Why then, you have no occasion for help, sir; you may leave

me at home to lay the cloth.——No; thou art my ancient friend, my fellow-traveller; and to reward thy faithful services, this night thou shalt partake my danger and my glory.——Sir, I have got glory enough under you already, to content any reasonable servant for his life.——Thy modesty makes me willing to double my bounty: this night may bring eternal honour to thee and thy family.——Eternal honour, sir, is too much, in conscience, for a serving-man; besides, ambition has been many a great soul's undoing.—— I doubt thou art afraid, my Lopez: thou shalt be armed with back, with breast, and head-piece. ——They will encumber me in my retreat.—— Retreat, my hero! thou never shalt retreat.—— Then, by my troth, I'll never go, sir.———But here he comes.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Will it never be night? Sure, 'tis the longest day the sun e'er travelled.

Lop. Would 'twere as long as those in Greenland, sir, that you might spin out your life t'other half year. I don't like these nightly projects; a man cann't see what he does: we shall have some scurvy mistake or other happen; a brace of bullets blunder through your head in the dark, perhaps, and spoil all your intrigue.

Lor. Away, you trembling wretch, away.

Lop. Nay, sir, what I say is purely for your safety; for as to myself——uds-death! I no more value the losing a quart of blood, than I do drinking a quart of wine. Besides, my veins are too full; my physician advised me but yesterday to let go twenty ounces for my health. So you see, sir, there's nothing of that in the case.

Lor. Then let me hear no other objections; for till I see Leonora I must lie upon the rack: I cannot bear her resentment, and will pacify her this night, or not live to see to-morrow.

Lop. Well, sir, since you are so determined, I sha'n't be impertinent with any farther advice; but I think you have laid your design to——[*He coughs*]—(I have got such a cold to-day)—to get in privately, have you not?

Lor. Yes, and have taken care to be introduced as far as her chamber-door with all secrecy.

Lop. [*He coughs.*] This unlucky cough; I had rather have had a fever at another time. Sir, I should be sorry to do you more harm than good upon this occasion: If this cough should come upon me in the midst of the action, [*Coughs,*] and give the alarm to the family, I should not forgive myself as long as I lived.

Lor. I have greater ventures than that to take my chance for, and cann't dispense with your attendance, sir.

Lop. This 'tis to be a good servant, and make one's self necessary.

Enter TOLEDO.

Tol. Sir,——I am glad I have found you. I am a man of honour, you know, and do always profess losing my life upon a handsome occasion: Sir, I come to offer you my service. I am informed, from unquestionable hands, that Don Carlos is enraged against you to a dangerous degree; and that old Alvarez has given positive directions to break the legs and arms of your servant Lopez.

Lop. Look you there now; I thought what 'twould come to. What do they meddle with me for? What have I to do in my master's amours? The old Don's got out of his senses, I think: Have I married his daughter?

Lor. Fear nothing; we'll take care o' thee—— Sir, I thank you for the favour of your intelligence; 'tis nothing, however, but what I expected, and am provided for.

Tol. Sir, I would advise you to provide yourself with good friends: I desire the honour to keep your back hand myself.

Lop. 'Tis very kind indeed. Pray, sir, have you never a servant with you could hold a racket for me too?

Tol. I have two friends, fit to head two armies; and yet—a word in your ear—they sha'n't cost you above a ducat a-piece.

Lop. Take 'em by all means, sir; you were never offered a better pennyworth in your life.

Tol. Ah, sir—little Diego——you have heard of him; he'd have been worth a legion upon this occasion: You know, I suppose, how they have served him——They have hanged him, but he made a noble execution; they clapped the rack and the priest to him at once, but could neither get a word of confession nor a groan of repentance: he died mighty well, truly.

Lor. Such a man is indeed much to be regretted: As for the rest of your escort, captain, I thank you for 'em, but shall not use 'em.

Tol. I'm sorry for't, sir, because I think you go in very great danger: I'm much afraid your rival won't give you fair play.

Lop. If he does, I'll be hanged: he's a damned passionate fellow, and cares not what mischief he does.

Lor. I shall give him a very good opportunity; for I'll have no other guards about me but you, sir. So come along.

Lop. Why, sir, this is the sin of presumption; setting Heaven at defiance; making a jack-pudding of a blunderbuss.

Lor. No more, but follow. Hold; turn this way; I see Camillo there. I would avoid him, till I see what part he takes in this odd affair of his sister's; for I would not have the quarrel fixed with him, if it be posaible to avoid it.

[*Exit* LORENZO.

Lop. Sir——Captain Toledo, one word, if you please, sir. I'm mighty sorry to see my master won't accept of your friendly offer. Look ye, I'm not very rich; but as far as the expence of a dollar went, if you'd be so kind to take a little care of me, it should be at your service.

Tol. Let me see:—a dollar you say? But suppose I'm wounded?

Lop. Why, you shall be put to no extraordinary charge upon that: I have been 'prentice to a barber, and will be your surgeon myself.

Tol. 'Tis too cheap in conscience; but my land-estate is so ill paid this war-time——

Lop. That a little industry may be commendable; so say no more; that matter's fixed.

[*Exeunt* LOP. *and* TOL.

Enter CAMILLO.

Cam. How miserable a perplexity have I brought myself into! Yet why do I complain? since, with all the dreadful torture I endure, I cann't repent of one wild step I've made. O love! what tempests canst thou raise, what storms canst thou assuage! To all thy cruelties I am resigned. Long years through seas of torment I'm content to roll, so thou wilt guide me to the happy port of my Lorenzo's arms, and bless me there with one calm day at last.

Enter ISABELLA.

What news, dear Isabella? Methinks there's something cheerful in your looks, may give a trembling lover hopes. If you have comfort for me, speak, for I indeed have need of it.

Isa. Were your wants yet still greater than they are, I bring a plentiful supply.

Cam. O Heavens! Is't possible?

Isa. New mysteries are out, and if you can find charms to wean Lorenzo from your sister, no other obstacle is in your way to all your wish.

Cam. Kind messenger from Heaven, speak on.

Isa. Know, then, that you are daughter to Alvarez.

Cam. How! Daughter to Alvarez?

Isa. You are: The truth this moment's come to light; and till this moment he, although your father, was a stranger to it, nay, did not even know you were a woman. In short, the great estate, which has occasioned these uncommon accidents, was left but on condition of a son; great hopes of one there was, when you destroyed 'em, and to your parents came a most unwelcome guest: To repair the disappointment, you were exchanged for that young Camillo, who few months after died. Your father then was absent, but your mother, quick in contrivance, bold in execution, during that infant's sickness, had resolved his death should not deprive her family of those advantages his life had given it; so ordered things with such dexterity, that once again there past a change between you: Of this (for reasons yet unknown to me) she made a secret to her husband, and took such wise precautions, that till this hour 'twas so to all the world, except the person from whom I now have heard it.

Cam. This news indeed affords a view of no unhappy termination; yet there are difficulties still may be of fatal hindrance.

Isa. None, except that one I just now named to you; for, to remove the last, know I have already unfolded all, both to Alvarez and Don Felix.

Cam. And how have they received it?

Isa. To your wishes both. As for Lorenzo, he is yet a stranger to all has past, and the two old fathers desire he may some moments longer continue so. They have agreed to be a little merry with the heat he is in, and engage you in a family-quarrel with him.

Cam. I doubt, Isabella, I shall act that part but faintly.

Isa. No matter; you'll make amends for it in the scene of reconciliation.

Cam. Pray Heaven it be my lot to act it with him.

Isa. Here comes Don Felix to wish you joy.

Enter Don FELIX.

Fel. Come near, my daughter, and with extended arms of great affection let me receive thee. [*Kisses her.*] Thou art a dainty wench, good faith thou art, and 'tis a mettled action thou hast done: if Lorenzo don't like thee the better for't, cods my life, he's a pitiful fellow, and I sha'n't believe the bonny old man had the getting of him.

Cam. I'm so encouraged by your forgiveness, sir, methinks I have some flattering hopes of his.

Fel. Of his! 'Egad, and he had best; I believe he'll meet with his match if he don't. What dost think of trying his courage a little, by way of a joke or so?

Isa. I was just telling her your design, sir.

Fel. Why, I'm in a mighty witty way upon this whimsical occasion; but I see him coming. You must not appear yet: go your way, in to the rest of the people there, and I'll inform him what a squabble he has worked himself into here.

[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* ISABELLA.

Enter LORENZO *and* LOPEZ.

Lop. Pray, sir, don't be so obstinate now; don't affront Heaven at this rate. I had a vision last night about this business, on purpose to forewarn you: I dreamt of goose-eggs, a blunt knife, and the snuff of a candle: I'm sure there's mischief towards——

Lor. You cowardly rascal, hold your tongue.

Fel. Lorenzo, come hither, my boy; I was just going to send for thee. The honour of our ancient family lies in thy hands; there is a combat preparing; thou must fight, my son.

Lop. Look you there now; did not I tell you? O! dreams are wondrous things: I never knew that snuff of a candle fail yet.

Lor. Sir, I do not doubt but Carlos seeks my life; I hope he'll do it fairly.

Lop. Fairly! Do you hear, fairly! Give me leave to tell you, sir, folks are not fit to be trusted with lives, that don't know how to look better after them. Sir, you gave it him; I hope you'll make him take a little more care on't.

Fel. My care shall be to make him do as a man of honour ought to do.

Lop. What, will you let him fight then? Let your own flesh and blood fight?

Fel. In a good cause, as this is.

Lop. *O, monstrum horrendum!* Now I have that humanity about me, that if a man but talks to me of fighting, I shiver at the name on't.

Lor. What you do on this occasion, sir, is worthy of you: And had I been wanting to you

in my due regards before, this noble action would have stamped that impression which a grateful son ought to have for so generous a father.

Lop. Very generous, truly! Gives him leave to be run through the guts, for his posterity to brag on a hundred years hence. [*Aside.*

Lor. I think, sir, as things now stand, it won't be right for me to wait for Carlos's call; I'll, if you please, prevent him.

Lop. Ay, pray, sir, do prevent him by all means; 'tis better made up, as you say, a thousand times.

Fel. Hold your tongue, you impertinent jack-anapes: I will have him fight, and fight like a fury too; if he don't, he'll be worsted, I can tell him that: For know, son, your antagonist is not the person you name; it is an enemy of twice his force.

Lop. O dear, O dear, O dear! and will nobody keep 'em asunder?

Lor. Nobody shall keep us asunder, if once I know the man I have to deal with.

Fel. Thy man then is——Camillo.

Lor. Camillo!

Fel. 'Tis he; he'll suffer nobody to decide this quarrel but himself.

Lop. Then there are no seconds, sir?

Fel. None.

Lop. He's a brave man.

Fel. No, he says nobody's blood shall be spilt upon this occasion, but theirs who have a title to it.

Lop. I believe he'll scarce have a law-suit upon the claim.

Fel. In short, he accuses thee of a shameful falsehood, in pretending his sister Leonora was thy wife; and has upon it prevailed with his father, as thou hast done with thine, to let the debate be ended by the sword 'twixt him and thee.

Lop. And pray, sir, with submission, one short question, if you please: What may the gentle Leonora say of this business?

Fel. She approves of the combat, and marries Carlos.

Lop. Why, God a-mercy!

Lor. Is it possible? Sure she's a devil, and not a woman.

Lop. Ay——cod, sir, the devil and a woman both, I think.

Fel. Well, thou shalt have satisfaction of some of 'em: Here they all come.

Enter ALVAREZ, LEONORA, CARLOS, SANCHO, *and* JACINTA.

Alv. Well, Don Felix, have you prepared your son? for mine, he's ready to engage.

Lor. And so is his. My wrongs prepare me for a thousand combats. My hand has hitherto been held by the regard I've had to every thing of kin to Leonora; but since the monstrous part she acts has driven her from my heart, I call for reparation from her family.

Alv. You'll have it, sir: Camillo will attend you instantly.

Lop. O lack! O lack! will nobody do a little something to prevent bloodshed? Why, madam, have you no pity, no bowels? [*To* LEO.] Stand and see one of your husbands butchered before your face? 'Tis an arrant shame.

Leo. If widowhood be my fate, I must bear it as I can.

Lop. Why, did you ever hear the like!

Lor. Talk to her no more: her monstrous impudence is no otherwise to be replied to, than by a dagger in her brother's heart.

Leo. Yonder he's coming to receive it. But have a care, brave sir, he does not place it in another's.

Lor. It is not in his power; he has a rotten cause upon his sword: I'm sorry he's engaged in it; but since he is, he must take his fate. For you, my bravo, expect me in your turn. [*To* CARLOS.

Car. You'll find Camillo, sir, will set your hand out.

Lor. A beardless boy. You might have matched me better, sir; but prudence is a virtue.

Fel. Nay, son, I would not have thee despise thy adversary neither; thou'lt find Camillo will put thee hardly to it.

Lor. I wish we were come to the trial. Why does he not appear?

Jac. Now do I hate to hear people brag thus. Sir, with my lady's leave, I'll hold a ducat he disarms you. [*They laugh.*

Lor. Why, what!—I think I'm sported with. Take heed; I warn you all; I am not to be trifled with.

Enter CAMILLO *and* ISABELLA.

Leo. You sha'n't, sir; here's one will be in earnest with you.

Lor. He's welcome, though I had rather have drawn my sword against another. I'm sorry, Camillo, we should meet on such bad terms as these; yet more sorry your sister should be the wicked cause on't; but since nothing will serve her but the blood either of a husband or brother, she shall be glutted with it. Draw.

Lop. Ah Lard, ah Lard, ah Lard!

Lor. And yet before I take this instrument of death into my fatal hand, hear me, Camillo; hear Alvarez; all! I imprecate the utmost powers of Heaven to shower upon my head the deadliest of its wrath; I ask that all hell's torments may unite to round my soul with one eternal anguish, if wicked Leonora ben't my wife.

Omnes. O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!

Leo. Why then, may all those curses pass him by, and wrap me in their everlasting pains, if ever once I had a fleeting thought of making him my husband.

Lop. O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!

Leo. Nay, more; to strike him dumb at once, and shew what men with honest looks can practise, know, he's married to another.

Alv. and Fel. How!

Leo. The truth of this is known to some here.

Jac. Nay, 'tis certainly so.

Isa. 'Tis to a friend of mine.

Car. I know the person.

Lor. 'Tis false, and thou art a villain for thy testimony.

Cam. Then let me speak. What they aver is true, and I myself was, in disguise, a witness of its doing.

Lor. Death and confusion! He a villain too! Have at thy heart. [*He draws.*

Lop. Ah! I cann't bear the sight on't.

Cam. Put up that furious thing; there's no business for't.

Lor. There's business for a dagger, stripling; 'tis that should be thy recompence.

Cam. Why then, to shew thee naked to the world, and close thy mouth for ever——I am myself thy wife.

Lor. What does the dog mean?

Cam. To fall upon the earth and sue for mercy. [*Kneels, and lets her periwig fall off.*

Lor. A woman!

Lop. Ay——cod, and a pretty one too, you wags you.

Lor. I'm all amazement. Rise, Camillo, (if I am still to call you by that name,) and let me hear the wonders you have for me.

Isa. That part her modesty will ask from me. I'm to inform you then, that this disguise hides other mysteries besides a woman: a large and fair estate was covered by it, which, with the lady, now will be resigned to you. 'Tis true, in justice it was yours before; but 'tis the god of love has done you right. To him you owe this strange discovery; through him you are to know the true Camillo's dead, and that this fair adventurer is daughter to Alvarez.

Lor. Incredible! but go on; let me hear more.

Fel. She'll tell thee the rest herself, the next dark night she meets thee in the garden.

Lor. Ha!——Was it Camillo then, that I——

Isa. It was Camillo who there made you happy; and who has virtue, beauty, wit, and love ——enough to make you so, while life shall last you.

Lor. The proof she gives me of her love deserves a large acknowledgment indeed. Forgive me, therefore, Leonora, if what I owe this goodness and these charms, I, with my utmost care, my life, my soul, endeavour to repay.

Cam. Is it then possible you can forgive me?

Lor. Indeed I can: few crimes have such a claim to mercy; but join with me then, dear Camillo, (for still I know you by no other name;) join with me to obtain your father's pardon: Yours, Leonora, too, I must implore; and yours, my friend, for now we may be such. [*To* CARLOS.] Of all I ask forgiveness. And since there is so fair a cause of all my wild mistakes, I hope I, by her interest, shall obtain it.

Alv. You have a claim to mine, Lorenzo; I wish I had so strong a one to yours; but if by future services (though I lay down my life amongst 'em) I may blot out of your remembrance a fault, (I cannot name,) I then shall leave the world in peace.

Lor. In peace then, sir, enjoy it; for from this very hour, whate'er is past with me, is gone for ever. Your daughter is too fair a mediatrix to be refused his pardon, to whom she owes the charms she pleads with for it.

From this good day, then, let all discord cease;
Let those to come be harmony and peace:
Henceforth let all our diff'rent interests join;
Let fathers, lovers, friends, let all combine
To make each other's days as blest as she will mine. [*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR MOTTEUX.

I'm thinking, now good husbands are so few,
To get one for my friend what I must do.
Camillo ventur'd hard, yet, at the worst,
She stole love's honey-moon, and try'd her lover first.
Many poor damsels, if they dar'd to tell,
Have done as much, but have not 'scaped so well.
'Tis well the scene's in Spain: thus, in the dark,
I should be loath to trust a London spark.
Some accident might, for a private reason,
Silence a female all this acting season.
Hard fate of woman! Any one wou'd vex
To think what odds you men have of our sex.
Restraint and custom share our inclination;
You men can try, and run o'er half the nation.
We dare not, even to avoid reproach,
When you're at White's, peep out of hackney-coach;
Nor with a friend at night, our fame regarding,
With glass drawn up, drive 'bout Covent-Garden.
If poor town-ladies steal in here, you rail,
Though like chaste nuns their modest looks they veil;
With this decorum, they can hardly gain
To be thought virtuous, e'en in Drury-Lane.

Though this you'll not allow, yet sure you may
A plot to snap you, in an honest way.
In love affairs one scarce would spare a brother:
All cheat; and married folks may keep a pother,
But look as if they cheated one another.
You may pretend our sex dissembles most,
But of your truth none have much cause to boast:
You promise bravely, but, for all your storming,
We find you're not so valiant at performing.

Then sure Camillo's conduct you'll approve:
Wou'd you not do as much for one you love?
Wedlock's but a blind bargain at the best,
You venture more sometimes, to be not half so blest.
All, soon or late, that dangerous venture make,
And some of you may make a worse mistake.

THE

PROVOKED HUSBAND.

BY

VANBURGH & CIBBER.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR WILKS.

THIS play took birth from principles of truth,
To make amends for errors past, of youth.
A bard, that's now no more, in riper days,
Conscious reviewed the licence of his plays;
And though applause his wanton muse had fired,
Himself condemned what sensual minds admired.
At length he owned that plays should let you see
Not only what you are, but ought to be:
Though vice was natural, 'twas never meant
The stage should shew it, but for punishment!
Warm with that thought, his muse once more took flame,
Resolved to bring licentious life to shame.
Such was the piece his latest pen design'd,
But left no traces of his plan behind.
Luxuriant scenes, unprun'd, or half contrived;
Yet through the mass his native fire survived:
Rough as rich ore, in mines the treasure lay,
Yet still 'twas rich, and forms at length a play,
In which the bold compiler boasts no merit,
But that his pains have saved your scenes of spirit;
Not scenes that would a noisy joy impart,
But such as hush the mind, and warm the heart.
From praise of hands no sure account he draws,
But fix'd attention is sincere applause.
If then (for hard you'll own the task) his art
Can to those embryon-scenes new life impart,
The living proudly would exclude his lays,
And to the buried bard resigns the praise.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Lord TOWNLY, *of a regular Life.*
Mr MANLY, *an Admirer of Lady Grace.*
Sir FRANCIS WRONGHEAD, *a Country Gentleman.*
Squire RICHARD, *his Son, a mere Whelp.*
Count BASSET, *a Gamester.*
JOHN MOODY, *Servant to Sir Francis, an honest Clown.*

WOMEN.

Lady TOWNLY, *immoderate in her pursuit of pleasures.*
Lady GRACE, *Sister to Lord Townly, of exemplary virtue.*
Lady WRONGHEAD, *Wife to Sir Francis, inclined to be a fine Lady.*
Miss JENNY, *her Daughter, pert and forward.*
Mrs MOTHERLY, *one that lets Lodgings.*
MYRTILLA, *her Niece, seduced by the Count.*
Mrs TRUSTY, *Lady Townly's Woman.*

Masqueraders, Constable, Servants, &c.

The Scene, Lord Townly's House, and sometimes Sir Francis's Lodgings.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Lord* TOWNLY'S *Apartment.*

Lord TOWNLY *solus.*

Why did I marry?——Was it not evident, my plain, rational scheme of life was impracticable, with a woman of so different a way of thinking?——Is there one article of it that she has not broke in upon?——Yes——let me do her justice——her reputation——that——I have no reason to believe is in question——But then how long her profligate course of pleasures may make her able to keep it——is a shocking question! and her presumption while she keeps it ——insupportable! for on the pride of that single virtue she seems to lay it down as a fundamental point, that the free indulgence of every other vice this fertile town affords is the birthright prerogative of a woman of quality——Amazing! that a creature so warm in the pursuit of her pleasures should never cast one thought towards her happiness—Thus, while she admits no lover, she thinks it a greater merit still, in her chastity, not to care for her husband; and while she herself is solacing in one continual round of cards and good company, he, poor wretch, is left at large, to take care of his own contentment.——'Tis time, indeed, some care were taken, and speedily there shall be——Yet let me not be rash——Perhaps this disappointment of my heart may make me too impatient; and some tempers, when reproached, grow more untractable.—Here she comes——Let me be calm a while.

Enter Lady TOWNLY.

Going out so soon after dinner, madam?

Lady Town. Lard, my lord! what can I possibly do at home?

Ld Town. What does my sister, Lady Grace, do at home?

Lady Town. Why, that to me is amazing! Have you any pleasure at home?

Ld Town. It might be in your power, madam, I confess, to make it a little more comfortable to me.

Lady Town. Comfortable! and so, my good lord, you would really have a woman of my rank and spirit stay at home to comfort her husband! Lord! what notions of life some men have!

Ld Town. Don't you think, madam, some ladies notions are full as extravagant?

Lady Town. Yes, my lord, when the tame doves live cooped within the penn of your precepts, I do think 'em prodigious indeed!

Ld Town. And when they fly wild about this town, madam, pray what must the world think of 'em then?

Lady Town. Oh! This world is not so ill bred as to quarrel with any woman for liking it.

Ld Town. Nor am I, madam, a husband so well bred, as to bear my wife's being so fond of it: in short, the life you lead, madam——

Lady Town. Is to me the pleasantest life in the world.

Ld Town. I should not dispute your taste, madam, if a woman had a right to please nobody but herself.

Lady Town. Why, whom would you have her please?

Ld Town. Sometimes her husband.

Lady Town. And don't you think a husband under the same obligation?

Ld Town. Certainly.

Lady Town. Why then, we are agreed, my lord—for if I never go abroad 'till I am weary of being at home——which you know is the case——is it not equally reasonable not to come home 'till one's weary of being abroad?

Ld Town. If this be your rule of life, madam, 'tis time to ask you one serious question.

Lady Town. Don't let it be long a-coming then——for I am in haste.

Ld Town. Madam, when I am serious, I expect a serious answer.

Lady Town. Before I know the question?

Ld Town. Psha——Have I power, madam, to make you serious by entreaty?

Lady Town. You have.

Ld Town. And you promise to answer me sincerely?

Lady Town. Sincerely.

Ld Town. Now then recollect your thoughts, and tell me seriously why you married me?

Lady Town. You insist upon truth, you say?

Ld Town. I think I have a right to it.

Lady Town. Why then, my lord, to give you, at once, a proof of my obedience and sincerity ——I think——I married——to take off that restraint that lay upon my pleasures while I was a single woman.

Ld Town. How, madam! Is any woman under less restraint after marriage than before it?

Lady Town. O, my lord! my lord! they are quite different creatures! Wives have infinite liberties in life, that would be terrible in an unmarried woman to take.

Ld Town. Name one.

Lady Town. Fifty, if you please——To begin, then, in the morning——a married woman may have men at her toilet, invite them to dinner, appoint them a party in a stage-box at the play, engross the conversation there, call 'em by their Christian names, talk louder than the players——from thence jaunt into the city——take a frolicksome supper at an India house——

perhaps, in her *gaieté de cœur*, toast a pretty fellow—then clatter again to this end of the town, break, with the morning, into an assembly, crowd to the hazard-table, throw a familiar *levant* upon some sharp lurching man of quality, and if he demands his money, turn it off with a loud laugh, and cry——you'll owe it him, to vex him! ha, ha!

Ld Town. Prodigious! [*Aside.*

Lady Town. These now, my lord, are some few of the many modish amusements that distinguish the privilege of a wife from that of a single woman.

Ld Town. Death, madam! what law has made these liberties less scandalous in a wife than in an unmarried woman?

Lady Town. Why, the strongest law in the world—custom——Custom, time out of mind, my lord.

Ld Town. Custom, madam, is the law of fools, but it shall never govern me.

Lady Town. Nay, then, my lord, 'tis time for me to observe the laws of prudence.

Ld Town. I wish I could see an instance of it.

Lady Town. You shall have one this moment, my lord; for I think, when a man begins to lose his temper at home, if a woman has any prudence, why——she'll go abroad 'till he comes to himself again. [*Going.*

Ld Town. Hold, madam——I am amaz'd you are not more uneasy at the life you lead! You don't want sense, and yet seem void of all humanity; for with a blush I say it, I think I have not wanted love.

Lady Town. Oh! don't say that, my lord, if you suppose I have my senses.

Ld Town. What is it I have done to you? What can you complain of?

Lady Town. Oh! nothing in the least. 'Tis true, you have heard me say I have owed my lord Lurcher an hundred pound these three weeks—but what then—a husband is not liable to his wife's debts of honour, you know——and if a silly woman will be uneasy about money she can't be sued for, what's that to him? As long as he loves her, to be sure, she can have nothing to complain of.

Ld Town. By Heaven, if my whole fortune thrown into your lap could make you delight in the cheerful duties of a wife, I should think myself a gainer by the purchase.

Lady Town. That is, my lord, I might receive your whole estate, provided you were sure I would not spend a shilling of it.

Ld Town. No, madam; were I master of your heart, your pleasures would be mine; but different as they are, I'll feed even your follies, to deserve it——Perhaps you may have some other trifling debts of honour abroad, that keep you out of humour at home——at least it shall not be my fault, if I have not more of your company.——There, there's a bill of five hundred——and now, madam——

Lady Town. And now, my lord, down to the ground I thank you——Now am I convinced, were I weak enough to love this man, I should never get a single guinea from him. [*Aside.*

Ld Town. If it be no offence, madam——

Lady Town. Say what you please, my lord; I am in that harmony of spirits, it is impossible to put me out of humour.

Ld Town. How long, in reason, then, do you think that sum ought to last you?

Lady Town. Oh, my dear, dear lord! now you have spoiled all again! How is it possible I should answer for an event that so utterly depends upon fortune? But to shew you that I am more inclined to get money than to throw it away——I have a strong possession, that with this five hundred I shall win five thousand.

Ld Town. Madam, if you were to win ten thousand, it would be no satisfaction to me.

Lady Town. O! the churl! Ten thousand! What! not so much as wish I might win ten thousand!——Ten thousand! O! the charming sum! What infinite pretty things might a woman of spirit do with ten thousand guineas! O' my conscience, if she were a woman of true spirit—she—she might lose 'em all again.

Ld Town. And I had rather it should be so, madam, provided I could be sure that were the last you would lose.

Lady Town. Well, my lord, to let you see I design to play all the good housewife I can, I am now going to a party at quadrille, only to piddle with a little of it, at poor two guineas a fish, with the duchess of Quiteright.

[*Exit Lady* TOWNLY.

Ld Town. Insensible creature! neither reproaches or indulgencies, kindness or severity, can wake her to the least reflection! Continual licence has lull'd her into such a lethargy of care, that she speaks of her excesses with the same easy confidence, as if they were so many virtues. What a turn has her head taken!—But how to cure it——I am afraid the physic must be strong that reaches her——Lenitives, I see, are to no purpose——Take my friends' opinion——Manly will speak freely——my sister with tenderness to both sides——They know my case——I'll talk with 'em.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr Manly, my lord, has sent to know if your lordship was at home.

Ld Town. They did not deny me?

Serv. No, my lord.

Ld Town. Very well; step up to my sister, and say I desire to speak with her.

Serv. Lady Grace is here, my lord. [*Exit Serv.*

Enter Lady GRACE.

Ld Town So, lady fair; what pretty weapon have you been killing your time with?

L. Grace. A huge folio, that has almost killed me—I think I have half read my eyes out.

Ld Town. O! you should not pore so much just after dinner, child.

L. Grace. That's true, but any body's thoughts are better than always one's own, you know.

Ld Town. Who's there?

Enter Servant.

Leave word at the door, I am at home to nobody but Mr Manly.

L. Grace. And why is he excepted, pray, my lord?

Ld Town. I hope, madam, you have no objection to his company?

L. Grace. Your particular orders, upon my being here, look, indeed, as if you thought I had not.

Ld Town. And your ladyship's inquiry into the reason of those orders shews, at least, it was not a matter indifferent to you.

L. Grace. Lord! You make the oddest constructions, brother!

Ld Town. Look you, my grave Lady Grace ——in one serious word—I wish you had him.

L. Grace. I can't help that.

Ld Town. Ha! you can't help it! Ha, ha! The flat simplicity of that reply was admirable.

L. Grace. Pooh! you teaze one, brother.

Ld Town. Come, I beg pardon, child——this is not a point, I grant you, to trifle upon; therefore I hope you'll give me leave to be serious.

L. Grace. If you desire it, brother; though, upon my word, as to Mr Manly's having any serious thoughts of me—I know nothing of it.

Ld. Town. Well——there's nothing wrong in your making a doubt of it——But, in short, I find, by his conversation of late, that he has been looking round the world for a wife; and if you were to look round the world for a husband, he's the first man I would give to you.

L. Grace. Then whenever he makes me any offer, brother, I will certainly tell you of it.

Ld Town. O! that's the last thing he'll do; he'll never make you an offer, till he's pretty sure it won't be refused.

L. Grace. Now you make me curious. Pray, did he ever make any offer of that kind to you?

Ld Town. Not directly; but that imports nothing: he is a man too well acquainted with the female world, to be brought into a high opinion of any one woman, without some well-examined proof of her merit: yet I have reason to believe that your good sense, your turn of mind, and your way of life, have brought him to so favourable a one of you, that a few days will reduce him to talk plainly to me; which as yet (notwithstanding our friendship) I have neither declined, nor encouraged him to.

L. Grace. I am mighty glad we are so near in our way of thinking; for to tell you the truth, he is much upon the same terms with me. You know he has a satirical turn, but never lashes any folly without giving due encomiums to its opposite virtue; and upon such occasions he is sometimes particular in turning his compliments upon me, which I don't receive with any reserve, lest he should imagine I take them to myself.

Ld Town. You are right, child: when a man of merit makes his addresses, good sense may give him an answer without scorn or coquetry.

L. Grace. Hush! he's here.

Enter Mr MANLY.

Man. My lord, your most obedient.

Ld Town. Dear Manly! yours—I was thinking to send to you.

Man. Then I am glad I am here, my lord—Lady Grace, I kiss your hands!——What! only you two! How many visits may a man make, before he fall into such unfashionable company: A brother and sister soberly sitting at home, when the whole town is a-gadding! I question if there is so particular a *tête-a-tête* again in the whole parish of St James's!

L. Grace. Fie, fie! Mr Manly, how censorious you are!

Man. I had not made the reflection, madam, but that I saw you an exception to it.—Where's my lady?

Ld Town. That, I believe, is impossible to guess.

Man. Then I won't try, my lord.

Ld Town. But 'tis probable I may hear of her by that time I have been four or five hours in bed.

Man. Now, if that were my case, I believe I should——But I beg pardon, my lord.

Ld Town. Indeed, sir, you shall not: You will oblige me if you speak out; for it was upon this head I wanted to see you.

Man. Why then, my lord, since you oblige me to proceed——if that were my case——I believe I should certainly sleep in another house.

L. Grace. How do you mean?

Man. Only a compliment, madam.

L. Grace. A compliment!

Man. Yes, madam, in rather turning myself out of doors than her.

L. Grace. Don't you think that would be going too far?

Man. I don't know but it might, madam; for, in strict justice, I think she ought rather to go than I.

L. Grace. This is new doctrine, Mr Manly.

Man. As old, madam, as love, honour, and obey! When a woman will stop at nothing that's wrong, why should a man balance any thing that's right?

L. Grace. Bless me! But this is fomenting things.

Man. Fomentations, madam, are sometimes necessary to dispel tumours; though I don't directly advise my lord to do this——This is only what, upon the same provocation, I would do myself.

L. Grace. Ay, ay! You would do! Bachelors wives, indeed, are finely governed.

Man. If the married men's were as well—I am apt to think we should not see so many mutual plagues taking the air in separate coaches!

L. Grace. Well, but suppose it your own case: Would you part with a wife, because she now and then stays out in the best company?

Ld Town. Well said, Lady Grace! come, stand up for the privilege of your sex! This is like to be a warm debate! I shall edify.

Man. Madam, I think a wife, after midnight, has no occasion to be in better company than her husband's; and that frequent unseasonable hours make the best company—the worst company she can fall into.

L. Grace. But if people of condition are to keep company with one another, how is it possible to be done unless one conforms to their hours?

Man. I cann't find, that any woman's good breeding obliges her to conform to other people's vices.

Ld Town. I doubt, child, here we are got a little on the wrong side of the question.

L. Grace. Why so, my lord? I cann't think the case so bad as Mr Manly states it——People of quality are not tied down to the rules of those who have their fortunes to make.

Man. No people, madam, are above being tied down to some rules, that have fortunes to lose.

L. Grace. Pooh! I'm sure, if you were to take my side of the argument, you would be able to say something more for it.

Ld Town. Well, what say you to that, Manly?

Man. Why, 'troth, my lord, I have something to say.

L. Grace. Ay! that I should be glad to hear now!

Ld Town. Out with it!

Man. Then, in one word, this, my lord. I have often thought, that the misconduct of my lady has, in a great measure, been owing to your lordship's treatment of her.

L. Grace. Bless me!

Ld Town. My treatment!

Man. Ay, my lord, you so idolized her before marriage, that you even indulged her like a mistress after it: In short you continued the lover, when you should have taken up the husband.

L. Grace. O frightful! this is worse than t'other! Can a husband love a wife too well?

Man. As easy, madam, as a wife may love her husband too little.

Ld Town. So! you two are never like to agree, I find.

L. Grace. Don't be positive, brother;—I am afraid we are both of a mind already. [*Aside.*] And do you, at this rate, ever hope to be married, Mr Manly?

Man. Never, madam, till I can meet with a woman that likes my doctrine.

L. Grace. 'Tis pity but your mistress should hear it.

Man. Pity me, madam, when I marry the woman that won't hear it.

L. Grace. I think at least, he cann't say that's me. [*Aside.*

Man. And so, my lord, by giving her more power than was needful, she has none where she wants it; having such entire possession of you, she is not mistress of herself! And, mercy on us! how many fine women's heads have been turned upon the same occasion!

Ld Town. O Manly! 'tis too true! there's the source of my disquiet! she knows, and has abused her power! Nay, I am still so weak (with shame I speak it) 'tis not an hour ago, that, in the midst of my impatience, I gave her another bill for five hundred to throw away.

Man. Well—my lord! to let you see I am sometimes upon the side of good-nature, I won't absolutely blame you; for the greater your indulgence, the more you have to reproach her with.

L. Grace. Ay, Mr Manly! here now, I begin to come in with you. Who knows, my lord, you may have a good account of your kindness?

Man. That, I am afraid, we had not best depend upon: But, since you have had so much patience, my lord, even go on with it a day or two more; and, upon her ladyship's next sally, be a little rounder in your expostulation; if that don't work, drop her some cool hints of determined reformation, and leave her——to breakfast upon 'em.

Ld Town. You are perfectly right! How valuable is a friend in our anxiety!

Man. Therefore, to divert that, my lord, I beg, for the present, we may call another cause.

L. Grace. Ay! for goodness sake, let's have done with this.

Ld Town. With all my heart.

L. Grace. Have you no news abroad, Mr Manly?

Man. A propos——I have some, madam; and I believe, my lord, as extraordinary in its kind—

Ld Town. Pray let's have it.

Man. Do you know, that your country neighbour, and my wise kinsman, Sir Francis Wrong-head, is coming to town with his whole family?

Ld Town. The fool! what can be his business here?

Man. Oh! of the last importance, I'll assure you——No less than the business of the nation.

Ld Town. Explain!

Man. He has carried his election——against Sir John Worthland.

Ld Town The deuce! what! for—for——

Man. The famous borough of Guzzledown!

Ld Town. A proper representative, indeed.

L. Grace. Pray, Mr Manly, don't I know him?

Man. You have dined with him, madam, when I was last down with my lord, at Bellmont.

L. Grace. Was not that he that got a little merry before dinner, and overset the tea-table in making his compliments to my lady?

Man. The same.

L. Grace. Pray what are his circumstances? I know but very little of him.

Man. Then he is worth your knowing, I can tell you, madam. His estate, if clear, I believe, might be a good two thousand pounds a year: Though, as it was left him saddled with two jointures, and two weighty mortgages upon it, there is no saying what it is——But, that he might be sure never to mend it, he married a profuse young hussy for love, without a penny of money. Thus having, like his brave ancestors, provided heirs for the family, (for his dove breeds like a tame pigeon,) he now finds children and interest-money make

such a bawling about his ears, that, at last, he has taken the friendly advice of his kinsman, the good Lord Danglecourt, to run his estate two thousand pounds more in debt, to put the whole management of what's left into Paul Pillage's hands, that he may be at leisure himself to retrieve his affairs by being a parliament-man.

Ld Town. A most admirable scheme, indeed!

Man. And with this politic prospect, he's now upon his journey to London.

Ld Town. What can it end in?

Man. Pooh! a journey into the country again.

Ld Town. Do you think he'll stir, till his money's gone, or, at least, till the session is over?

Man. If my intelligence is right, my lord, he won't sit long enough to give his vote for a turnpike.

Ld Town. How so?

Man. O! a bitter business! he had scarce a vote in the whole town, beside the returning officer: Sir John will certainly have it heard at the bar of the house, and send him about his business again.

Ld Town. Then he has made a fine business of it indeed.

Man. Which, as far as my little interest will go, shall be done in as few days as possible.

L. Grace. But why would you ruin the poor gentleman's fortune, Mr Manly?

Man. No, madam, I would only spoil his project to save his fortune.

L. Grace. How are you concerned enough to do either?

Man. Why——I have some obligations to the family, madam; I enjoy at this time a pretty estate, which Sir Francis was heir at law to: But ——by his being a booby, the last will of an obstinate old uncle gave it to me.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. [*To* MAN.] Sir, here's one of your servants from your house desires to speak with you.

Man. Will you give him leave to come in, my lord?

Ld Town. Sir——the ceremony's of your own making.

Enter MANLY'S *Servant.*

Man. Well, James! what's the matter now?

James. Sir, here's John Moody's just come to town; he says Sir Francis and all the family will be here to-night, and is in a great hurry to speak with you.

Man. Where is he?

James. At our house, sir: he has been gaping and stumping about the streets, in his dirty boots, and asking every one he meets, if they can tell him where he may have a good lodging for a parliament-man, till he can hire a handsome whole house, fit for all his family, for the winter.

Man. I am afraid, my lord, I must wait upon Mr Moody.

Ld Town. Pr'ythee let's have him here: He will divert us.

Man. O, my lord! he's such a cub! not but he's so near common sense, that he passes for a wit in the family.

L. Grace. I beg of all things we may have him: I am in love with nature, let her dress be never so homely!

Man. Then desire him to come hither, James. [*Exit* JAMES.

L. Grace. Pray what may be Mr Moody's post?

Man. Oh! his *maître d'hôtel*, his butler, his bailiff, his hind, his huntsman, and sometimes——his companion.

Ld Town. It runs in my head, that the moment this knight has set him down in the house, he will get up, to give them the earliest proof of what importance he is to the public in his own country.

Man. Yes, and, when they have heard him, he will find, that his utmost importance stands valued at——sometimes being invited to dinner.

L. Grace. And her ladyship, I suppose, will make as considerable a figure in her sphere too.

Man. That you may depend upon: For (if I don't mistake) she has ten times more of the jade in her than she yet knows of: And she will improve in this rich soil in a month, that she will visit all the ladies, that will let her into their houses; and run in debt to all the shopkeepers that will let her into their books: In short, before her important spouse has made five pounds by his eloquence, at Westminster, she will have lost five hundred at dice and quadrille, in the parish of St James's.

Ld Town. So that, by that time he is declared unduly elected, a swarm of duns will be ready for their money, and his worship——will be ready for a jail.

Man. Yes, yes, that I reckon will close the account of this hopeful journey to London——But see, here comes the fore-horse of the team!

Enter JOHN MOODY.

Oh! honest John!

J. Mood. Ad's waunds and heart! Measter Manly! I'm glad I ha' fun ye. Lawd. Let me give me a buss! Why that's friendly naw! For I thought we should never ha' got hither! Well, and how d'ye do, measter?——Good lack! I beg pardon for my bawldness——I did not see 'at his honour was here.

Ld Town. Mr Moody, your servant: I am glad to see you in London. I hope all the good family is well.

J. Mood. Thanks be praised, your honour, they are all in pretty good heart; tho'f we have had a power of crosses upo' the road.

L. Grace. I hope my lady has had no hurt, Mr Moody?

J. Mood. Nos, and please your ladyship, she was never in better humour: There's more enough stirring now.

Man. What has been the matter, John?

J. Mood. Why, we came up in such a hurry you mun think, that our tackle was not so tight as it should be.

Man. Come, tell us all——Pray how do they travel?

J. Mood. Why, i' the awld coach, measter; and, 'cause my lady loves to do things handsome, to be sure, she would have a couple of cart-horses clapt to the four old geldings, that neighbours might see she went up to London in her coach and six! And so Giles Joulter, the ploughman, rides postillion!

Man. Very well! The journey sets out as it should do. [*Aside*] What, do they bring all the children with them too?

J. Mood. Noa, noa; only the young Squoire, and Miss Jenny. The other foive are all out at board, at half-a-crown a head a week, with John Growse, at Smoke-Dunghill farm.

Man. Good again! a right English academy for younger children!

J. Mood. Anan, sir? [*Not understanding him.*

L. Grace. Poor souls! What will become of 'em?

J. Mood. Nay, nay, for that matter, madam, they are in very good hands: Joan loves 'um as tho'f they were all her own; for she was wet nurse to every mother's babe of 'um——Ay, ay, they'll ne'er want for a belly-full there!

L. Grace. What simplicity!

Man. The lud 'a mercy upon all good folks! What work will these people make!

[*Holding up his hands.*

Ld Town. And when do you expect them here, John?

J. Mood. Why, we were in hopes to ha' come yesterday, an' it had no been that the owld wheaze-belly horse tired: And then we were so cruelly loaden, that the two fore-wheels came crash down at once, in Waggon-Rut-Lane, and there we lost four hours 'fore we cou'd set things to rights again.

Man. So they bring all their baggage with the coach then?

J. Mood. Ay, ay, and good store on't there is ——Why, my lady's geer alone were as much as filled four portmantel trunks, besides the great deal box, that heavy Ralph and the monkey sit upon behind.

Ld Town. L. Grace, and Man. Ha, ha, ha!

L. Grace. Well, Mr Moody, and pray how many are they within the coach?

J. Mood. Why, there's my lady and his worship, and the young Squoire, and Miss Jenny, and the fat lap-dog, and my lady's maid, Mrs Handy, and Doll Tripe, the cook, that's all—— Only Doll puked a little with riding backward, so they hoisted her into the coach-box, and then her stomach was easy.

L. Grace. Oh! I see 'em! I see 'em go by me! Ah, ha! [*Laughing.*

J. Mood. Then you mun think, measter, there was some stowage for the belly as well as the back too; children are apt to be famisht upo' the road; so we had such cargoes of plumb-cake, and baskets of tongues, and biscuits, and cheese, and cold boil'd beef——And then, in case of sickness, bottles of cherry brandy, plague water, sack, tent, and strong beer so plenty, as made th' owld coach crack again! Mercy upon them! and send 'em all well to town, I say.

Man. Ay! and well out on't again, John.

J. Mood. Ods bud! measter, you're a wise mon, and for that matter, so am I——Whoam's whoam, I say: I'm sure we ha' got but little good e'er sin' we turned our backs on't. Nothing but mischief! Some devil's trick or other played us, awth' dey lung! crack goes one thing; bawnce goes another. Woa, says Roger——Then sowse! we are all set fast in a slough. Whaw! cries miss, Scream go the maids! and bawl, just as tho'f they were stuck. And so, mercy on us! this was the trade from morning to night. But my lady was in such a murrain haste to be here, that set out she would, tho'f I told her it was Childermas day.

Man. These ladies, these ladies, John——

J. Mood. Ah, measter! I ha' seen a little of 'em; and I find that the best——when she's mended, won't ha' much goodness to spare.

Ld Town. Well said, John! Ha, ha!

Man. I hope at least, you and your good woman agree still.

J. Mood. Ay, ay! much of a muchness. Bridget sticks to me: Though, as for her goodness—— Why, she was willing to come to London too ——But hawld a bit! Noa, noa, says I, there may be mischief enough done without you.

Man. Why, that was bravely spoken, John, and like a man.

J. Mood. Ah, weast heart, were measter but hawf the mon that I am——Ods wookers! tho'f he'll speak stawtly too sometimes——But then he conno' hawld it——no! he conno' hawld it.

Ld Town. L. Grace, and Man. Ha, ha, ha!

J. Mood. Ods flesh! But I mun hye me whoam! th' coach will be coming every hour naw——but measter charged me to find your worship out; for he has hugey business with you; and will certainly wait upon you, by that time he can put on a clean neckcloth.

Man. O John! I'll wait upon him.

J. Mood. Why, you wonno' be so kind, wull ye?

Man. If you'll tell me where you lodge.

J. Mood. Just i' th' street next to where your worship dwells, the sign of the Golden-ball—— It's gold all over; where they sell ribbands and flappits, and other sort of geer for gentlewomen.

Man. A milliner's?

J. Mood. Ay, ay, one Mrs Motherly: Waunds! she has a couple of clever girls there stitching i' th' fore-room.

Man. Yes, yes, she's a woman of good business, no doubt on't——Who recommended that house to you, John?

J. Mood. The greatest good fortune in the world, sure! For, as I was gaping about streets, who should look out of the window there, but the fine gentleman that was always riding by our coach side, at York races——Count——Basset; ay, that's he.

Man. Basset? Oh, I remember! I know him by sight.

J. Mood. Well! to be sure, as civil a gentleman to see to——

Man. As any sharper in town. [*Aside.*

J. Mood. At York, he used to breakfast with my lady every morning.

Man. Yes, yes; and I suppose her ladyship will return his compliment here in town. [*Aside.*

J. Mood. Well, measter——

Ld Town. My service to Sir Francis and my lady, John.

L. Grace. And mine, pray, Mr Moody.

J. Mood. Ay, your honours, they'll be proud on't, I dare say.

Man. I'll bring my compliments myself: So, honest John——

J. Mood. Dear measter Manly, the goodness of goodness bless and preserve you!

[*Exit* JOHN MOODY.

Ld Town. What a natural creature 'tis!

L. Grace. Well! I cann't but think John, in a wet afternoon in the country, must be very good company.

Ld Town. O! the *Tramontane!* If this were known at half the quadrille-tables in town, they would lay down their cards to laugh at you.

L. Grace. And the minute they took them up again, they would do the same at the losers—— But, to let you see that I think good company may sometimes want cards to keep them together, what think you if we three sat soberly down, to kill an hour at ombre?

Man. I shall be too hard for you, madam.

L. Grace. No matter! I shall have as much advantage of my lord as you have of me.

Ld Town. Say you so, madam? Have at you, then! Here! Get the ombre-table and cards.

[*Exit Lord* TOWNLY.

L. Grace. Come, Mr Manly——I know you don't forgive me now?

Man. I don't know whether I ought to forgive your thinking so, madam. Where do you imagine I could pass my time so agreeably?

L. Grace. I'm sorry my lord is not here to take his share of the compliment——But he'll wonder what's become of us.

Man. I'll follow in a moment, madam——

[*Exit Lady* GRACE.

It must be so——She sees I love her——yet with what unoffending decency she avoids an explanation! How amiable is every hour of her conduct! What a vile opinion have I had of the whole sex for these ten years past, which this sensible creature has recovered in less than one! Such a companion, sure, might compensate all the irksome disappointments that pride, folly, and falsehood ever gave me!

Could women regulate, like her, their lives,
What halcyon days were in the gift of wives.
Vain rovers, then, might envy what they have,
And only fools would mock the married state.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Mrs* MOTHERLY'S *House.*

Enter Count BASSET *and Mrs* MOTHERLY.

C. Bas. I tell you there is not such a family in England for you! Do you think I would have gone out of your lodgings for any body that was not sure to make you easy for the winter?

Moth. Nay, I see nothing against it, sir, but the gentleman's being a parliament-man; and, when people may, as it were, think one impertinent, or be out of humour, you know, when a body comes to ask for one's own——

C. Bas. Pshaw! Pr'ythee never trouble thy head—His pay is as good as the bank!——Why, he has above two thousand a year!

Moth. Alas-a-day! that's nothing: Your people of ten thousand a year have ten thousand things to do with it.

C. Bas. Nay, if you are afraid of being out of your money, what do you think of going a little with me, Mrs Motherly?

Moth. As how?

C. Bas. Why, I have a game in my hand, in which, if you'll croup me, that is, help me to play it, you shall go five hundred to nothing.

Moth. Say you so?—Why then, I go, sir——and now pray let's see your game.

C. Bas. Look you, in one word, my cards lie thus—When I was down this summer at York, I happened to lodge in the same house with the knight's lady that's now coming to lodge with you——

Moth. Did you so, sir?

C. Bas. And sometimes had the honour to breakfast, and pass an idle hour with her.

Moth. Very good; and here I suppose you would have the impudence to sup, and be busy with her?

C. Bas. Pshaw! pr'ythee hear me!

Moth. Is this your game? I would not give sixpence for it! What, you have a passion for her pin-money——No, no, country ladies are not so flush of it!

C. Bas. Nay, if you won't have patience——

Moth. One had need to have a good deal, I am sure, to hear you talk at this rate! Is this your way of making my poor niece Myrtilla easy?

C. Bas. Death! I shall do it still, if the woman will but let me speak!

Moth. Had not you a letter from her this morning?

C. Bas. I have it here in my pocket——this is it [*Shews it, and puts it up again.*

Moth. Ay, but I don't find you have made any answer to it.

C. Bas. How the devil can I, if you won't hear me?

Moth. What! hear you talk of another woman?

C. Bas. O lud! O lud! I tell you, I'll make her fortune——'Ounds! I'll marry her.

Moth. A likely matter! If you would not do it when she was a maid, your stomach is not so sharp set now, I presume.

C. Bas. Hey-day! why your head begins to turn, my dear! The devil! you did not think I proposed to marry her myself?

Moth. If you don't, who the devil do you think will marry her?

C. Bas. Why, a fool——

Moth. Humph! there may be sense in that—

C. Bas. Very good——One for t'other then; if I can help her to a husband, why should not you come into my scheme of helping me to a wife?

Moth. Your pardon, sir! ay! ay! in an honourable affair, you know, you may command me—— But pray, where is this blessed wife and husband to be had?

C. Bas. Now have a little patience——You must know then, this country knight and his lady bring up in the coach with them their eldest son and a daughter, to teach them to——wash their faces and turn their toes out.

Moth. Good!

C. Bas. The son is an unlicked whelp, about sixteen, just taken from school, and begins to hanker after every wench in the family; the daughter, much of the same age, a pert, forward hussy, who, having eight thousand pound left her by an old doting grandmother, seems to have a devilish mind to be doing in her way too.

Moth. And your design is—to put her into business for life?

C. Bas. Look you; in short, Mrs Motherly, we gentlemen, whose occasional chariots roll only upon the four aces, are liable, sometimes, you know, to have a wheel out of order; which, I confess, is so much my case at present, that my dapple greys are reduced to a pair of ambling chairmen: Now, if, with your assistance, I can whip up this young jade into a hackney-coach, I may chance, in a day or two after, to carry her in my own chariot, *en famille*, to an opera. Now, what do you say to me?

Moth. Why, I shall not sleep——for thinking of it. But how will you prevent the family's smoking your design?

C. Bas. By renewing my addresses to the mother.

Moth. And how will the daughter like that, think you?

C. Bas. Very well——whilst it covers her own affair.

Moth. That's true——it must do——but, as you say, one for t'other, sir, I stick to that—— If you don't do my niece's business with the son, I'll blow you with the daughter, depend upon't.

C. Bas. It's a bet—pay as we go, I tell you, and the five hundred shall be staked in a third hand.

Moth. That's honest——But here comes my niece! shall we let her into the secret?

C. Bas. Time enough! may be I may touch upon it.

Enter MYRTILLA.

Moth. So, niece, are all the rooms done out and the beds sheeted?

Myr. Yes, madam; but Mr Moody tells us the lady always burns wax in her own chamber, and we have none in the house.

Moth. Odso! then I must beg your pardon, count: this is a busy time, you know.

[*Exit Mrs* MOTHERLY.

C. Bas. Myrtilla! how dost thou do, child?

Myr. As well as a losing gamester can.

C. Bas. Why, what have you lost?

Myr. What I shall never recover; and what's worse, you that have won it, don't seem to be much the better for't.

C. Bas. Why, child, dost thou ever see any body overjoyed for winning a deep stake six months after 'tis over?

Myr. Would I had never played for it!

C. Bas. Psha! Hang these melancholy thoughts! we may be friends still.

Myr. Dull ones.

C. Bas. Useful ones perhaps——suppose I should help thee to a good husband?

Myr. I suppose you'll think any one good enough that will take me off o' your hands.

C. Bas. What do you think of the young country 'squire, the heir of the family that's coming to lodge here?

Myr. How should I know what to think of him?

C. Bas. Nay, I only give you the hint, child; it may be worth your while, at least, to look about you—Hark! what bustle's that without?

Enter Mrs MOTHERLY *in haste.*

Moth. Sir! sir! the gentleman's coach is at the door! they are all come!

C. Bas. What, already?

Moth. They are just getting out!——won't you step and lead in my lady? Do you be in the way, niece! I must run and receive them.

[*Exit Mrs* MOTHERLY.

C. Bas. And think of what I told you.

[*Exit Count.*

Myr. Ay! ay! you have left me enough to think of as long as I live—A faithless fellow! I am sure I have been true to him; and for that only reason, he wants to be rid of me: But while women are weak, men will be rogues! And, for a bane to both their joys and ours, when our vanity indulges them in such innocent favours as make them adore us, we can never be well till we grant them the very one that puts an end to their devotion—But here comes my aunt and the company.

Mrs MOTHERLY *returns, shewing in Lady* WRONGHEAD, *led by Count* BASSET.

Moth. If your ladyship pleases to walk into this parlour, madam, only for the present, till your servants have got all your things in.

L. Wrong. Well! dear sir, this is so infinitely obliging!—I protest it gives me pain though, to turn you out of your lodging thus!

C. Bas. No trouble in the least, madam; we single fellows are soon moved; besides, Mrs Motherly's my old acquaintance, and I could not be her hindrance.

Moth. The count is so well-bred, madam, I dare say he would do a great deal more to accommodate your ladyship.

L. Wrong. O, dear madam!——A good well-bred sort of a woman. [*Apart to the Count.*

C. Bas. O, madam, she is very much among people of quality; she is seldom without them in her house.

L. Wrong. Are there a good many people of quality in this street, Mrs Motherly?

Moth. Now your ladyship is here, madam, I don't believe there is a house without them.

L. Wrong. I am mighty glad of that: for really I think people of quality should always live among one another.

C. Bas. 'Tis what one would choose indeed, madam.

L. Wrong. Bless me! but where are the children all this while?

Moth. Sir Francis, madam, I believe is taking care of them.

Sir Fran. [*Within.*] John Moody! stay you by the coach, and see all our things out—Come, children.

Moth. Here they are, madam.

Enter Sir FRANCIS, *Squire* RICHARD, *and Miss* JENNY.

Sir Fran. Well, count! I mun say it, this was koynd, indeed!

C. Bas. Sir Francis! give me leave to bid you welcome to London.

Sir Fran. Psha! how dost do, mon—Waunds, I'm glad to see thee! A good sort of a house this.

C. Bas. Is not that Master Richard?

Sir Fran. Ey! ey! that's young hopeful—why dost not baw, Dick?

Sq. Rich. So I do, feyther.

C. Bas. Sir, I'm glad to see you——I protest Mrs Jane is grown so, I should not have known her.

Sir Fran. Come forward, Jenny.

Jen. Sure, papa, do you think I don't know how to behave myself?

C. Bas. If I have permission to approach her, Sir Francis—

Jen. Lord, sir, I'm in such a frightful pickle—[*Salute.*

C. Bas. Every dress that's proper must become you, madam,—you have been a long journey.

Jen. I hope you will see me in a better to-morrow, sir.

[*Lady* WRONG. *whispers Mrs* MOTH. *pointing to* MYRTILLA.

Moth. Only a niece of mine, madam, that lives with me: she will be proud to give your ladyship any assistance in her power.

L. Wrong. A pretty sort of a young woman—Jenny, you two must be acquainted.

Jen. O, mamma! I am never strange, in a strange place! [*Salutes* MYRTILLA.

Myr. You do me a great deal of honour, madam—Madam, your ladyship's welcome to London.

Jen. Mamma! I like her prodigiously! she called me my ladyship.

Sq. Rich. Pray, mother, mayn't I be acquainted with her too?

L. Wrong. You! you clown! stay till you learn a little more breeding first.

Sir Fran. Ods heart! my Lady Wronghead! why do you baulk the lad? how should he ever learn breeding, if he does not put himself forward?

Sq. Rich. Why ay, feyther, does mother think 'at I'd be uncivil to her?

Myr. Master has so much good-humour, madam, he would soon gain upon any body.

[*He kisses* MYR.

Sq. Rich. Lo' you there, moather: and you would be quiet, she and I should do well enough.

L. Wrong. Why, how now, sirrah! Boys must not be so familiar.

Sq. Rich. Why, 'an I know nobody, haw the murrain mun I pass my time here, in a strange place? Naw you and I, and sister, forsooth, sometimes, in an afternoon, may play at one and thirty bone-ace purely.

Jen. Speak for yourself, sir! D'ye think I play at such clownish games?

Sq. Rich. Why and you woant, yo' ma' let it alone; then she and I, mayhap, will have a bawt at all-fours, without you.

Sir Fran. Noa! noa! Dick, that won't do neither; you mun learn to make one at ombre here, child.

Myr. If master pleases, I'll shew it him.

Sq. Rich. What! the Humber! Hoy-day! why does our river run to this tawn, feyther?

Sir Fran. Pooh! you silly tony! Ombre is a geam at cards, that the better sort of people play three together at.

Sq. Rich. Nay the moare the merrier, I say; but sister is always so cross-grained——

Jen. Lord! this boy is enough to deaf people—and one has really been stuffed up in a coach so long, that—Pray, madam, could not I get a little powder for my hair?

Myr. If you please to come along with me, madam. [*Exeunt* MYR. *and* JENNY.

Sq. Rich. What, has sister ta'en her away naw! mess, I'll go and have a little game with 'em.

[*Exit after them.*

L. Wrong. Well, count, I hope you won't go

far change your lodgings, but you will come, and be at home here sometimes?

Sir Fran. Ay, ay! pr'ythee come and take a bit of mutton with us, naw and tan, when thou'st nowght to do.

C. Bas. Well, Sir Francis, you shall find I'll make but very little ceremony.

Sir Fran. Why ay naw, that's hearty!

Moth. Will your ladyship please to refresh yourself with a dish of tea after your fatigue? I think I have pretty good.

L. Wrong. If you please, Mrs Motherly; but I believe we had best have it above stairs.

Moth. Very well, madam: it shall be ready immediately. [*Exit Mrs* MOTHERLY.

L. Wrong. Won't you walk up, sir?

Sir Fran. Moody!

C. Bas. Sha'n't we stay for Sir Francis, madam?

L. Wrong. Lard! don't mind him! he will come if he likes it.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay! ne'er heed me——I ha' things to look after.

[*Exeunt Lady* WRONG. *and Count* BAS.

Enter JOHN MOODY.

J. Mood. Did your worship want muh?

Sir Fran. Ay, is the coach cleared, and all our things in?

J. Mood. Aw but a few band-box s, and the nook that's left o' th' goose poy—But, a plague on him, the monkey has gin us the slip, I think—I suppose he's goon to see his relations; for here looks to be a power of 'um in this tawn——but heavy Ralph is skawer'd after him.

Sir Fran. Why, let him go to the devil! no matter and the hawnds had had him a month agoe—but I wish the coach and horses were got safe to th' inn! This is a sharp tawn, we mun look about us here, John, therefore I would have you go alung with Roger, and see that nobody runs away with them before they get to the stable.

J. Mood. Alas-a-day, sir! I believe our awld cattle woant yeasily be run away with to-night—but howsomdever, we's take the best care we can of um, poor sawls.

Sir Fran. Well, well! make haste then—

[MOODY *goes out, and returns.*

J. Mood. Ods flesh! here's Master Monly come to wait upo' your worship!

Sir Fran. Where is he?

J. Mood. Just coming in at threshould.

Sir Fran. Then goa about your business.

[*Exit* MOODY.

Enter MANLY.

Cousin Monly! Sir, I am your very humble servant.

Man. I heard you were come, Sir Francis—and—

Sir Fran. Odsheart! this was so kindly done of you naw.

Man. I wish you may think it so, cousin! for I confess, I should have been better pleased to have seen you in any other place.

Sir Fran. How soa, sir?

Man. Nay, 'tis for your own sake: I'm not concerned.

Sir Fran. Look you, cousin! tho'f I know you wish me well, yet I don't question I shall give you such weighty reasons for what I have done, that you will say, sir, this is the wisest journey that ever I made in my life.

Man. I think it ought to be, cousin; for, I believe, you will find it the most expensive one—your election did not cost you a trifle, I suppose.

Sir Fran. Why ay! it's true! That—that did lick a little: but if a man's wise, (and I ha'n't fawnd yet that I'm a fool) there are ways, cousin, to lick one's self whole again.

Man. Nay, if you have that secret——

Sir Fran. Don't you be fearful, cousin——you'll find that I know something.

Man. If it be any thing for your good, I should be glad to know it too.

Sir Fran. In short then, I have a friend in a corner, that has let me a little into what's what, at Westminster—that's one thing.

Man. Very well! but what good is that to do you?

Sir Fran. Why not me, as much as it does other folks?

Man. Other people, I doubt, have the advantage of different qualifications.

Sir Fran. Why ay! there's it naw! you'll say that I have lived all my days i'the country—what then—I'm o' the quorum—I have been at sessions, and I have made speeches there! ay, and at vestry too—and mayhap they may find here—that I have brought my tongue up to town with me! D'ye take me naw?

Man. If I take your case right, cousin, I am afraid the first occasion you will have for your eloquence here, will be, to shew that you have any right to make use of it at all.

Sir Fran. How d'ye mean?

Man. That Sir John Worthland has lodged a petition against you.

Sir Fran. Petition! why ay! there let it lie—we'll find a way to deal with that, I warrant you!—Why, you forget, cousin, Sir John's o'the wrung side, mon!

Man. I doubt, Sir Francis, that will do you but little service; for, in cases very notorious (which I take yours to be) there is such a thing as a short day, and dispatching them immediately.

Sir Fran. With all my heart! the sooner I send him home again the better.

Man. And this is the scheme you have laid down to repair your fortune?

Sir Fran. In one word, cousin, I think it my duty! the Wrongheads have been a considerable family, ever since England was England; and since the world knows I have talents wherewithal, they sha'n't say it's my fault, if I don't make as good a figure as any that ever were at the head on't.

Man. Nay! this project, as you have laid it, will come up to any thing your ancestors have done these five hundred years.

Sir Fran. And let me alone to work it! Mayhap I hav'n't told you all neither—

Man. You astonish me! what! and is it full as practicable as what you have told me?

Sir Fran. Ay, tho'f I say it—every whit, cousin! You'll find that I have more irons i'the fire than one! I doan't come of a fool's errand!

Man. Very well.

Sir Fran. In a word, my wife has got a friend at court, as well as myself, and her dowghter Jenny is now pretty well grown up—

Man. [*Aside.*] —And what in the devil's name would he do with the dowdy?

Sir Fran. Naw, if I doan't lay in for a husband for her, mayhap, i' this tawn, she may be looking out for herself—

Man. Not unlikely.

Sir Fran. Therefore, I have some thoughts of getting her to be maid of honour.

Man. [*Aside.*] Oh! he has taken my breath away! but I must hear him out—Pray, Sir Francis, do you think her education has yet qualified her for a court?

Sir Fran. Why, the girl is a little too mettlesome, it's true; but she has tongue enough: She woan't be dasht! Then she shall learn to dauncé forthwith, and that will soon teach her how to stond still, you know.

Man. Very well; but when she is thus accomplished, you must still wait for a vacancy.

Sir Fran. Why I hope one has a good chance for that every day, cousin! For, if I take it right, that's a post that folks are not more willing to get into, than they are to get out of—It's like an orange-tree, upon that accawnt—it will bear blossoms, and fruit that's ready to drop, at the same time.

Man. Well, sir, you best know how to make good your pretensions. But pray where is my lady and my young cousins? I should be glad to see them too.

Sir Fran. She is but just taking a dish of tea with the count and my landlady—I'll call her dawn.

Man. No, no, if she's engaged, I shall call again.

Sir Fran. Ods heart! but you mun see her naw, cousin; what! the best friend I have in the world!——Here! sweetheart! [*To a Servant without.*] pr'ythee desire my lady and the gentleman to come down a bit; tell her here's cousin Manly come to wait upon her.

Man. Pray, sir, who may the gentleman be?

Sir Fran. You mun know him, to be sure; why it's Count Basset.

Man. Oh! is it he?—Your family will be infinitely happy in his acquaintance.

Sir Fran. Troth, I think so too: He's the civilest man that ever I knew in my life——Why! here he would go out of his own lodgings, at an hour's warning, purely to oblige my family. Wasn't that kind naw?

Man. Extremely civil—the family is in admirable hands already!

Sir Fran. Then my lady likes him hugely—all the time of York races she would never be without him.

Man. That was happy indeed! and a prudent man, you know, should always take care that his wife may have innocent company.

Sir Fran. Why ay! that's it! and I think there could not be such another!

Man. Why truly, for her purpose, I think not.

Sir Fran. Only naw and tan he—he stonds a leetle too much upon ceremony; that's his fault.

Man. O never fear! he'll mend that every day——Mercy on us! what a head he has!

Sir Fran. So! here they come!

Enter Lady WRONGHEAD, *Count* BASSET, *and Mrs* MOTHERLY.

L. Wrong. Cousin Manly, this is infinitely obliging! I am extremely glad to see you.

Man. Your most obedient servant, madam; I am glad to see your ladyship look so well after your journey.

L. Wrong. Why really, coming to London is apt to put a little more life in one's looks.

Man. Yet the way of living here is very apt to deaden the complexion——and, give me leave to tell you, as a friend, madam, you are come to the worst place in the world for a good woman to grow better in.

L. Wrong. Lord, cousin, how should people ever make any figure in life, that are always moped up in the country?

C. Bas. Your ladyship certainly takes the thing in a quite right light, madam: Mr Manly, your humble servant—a hem.

Man. Familiar puppy! [*Aside.*] Sir, your most obedient—I must be civil to the rascal, to cover my suspicion of him. [*Aside.*

C. Bas. Was you at White's this morning, sir?

Man. Yes, sir, I just call'd in.

C. Bas. Pray—what—was there any thing done there?

Man. Much as usual, sir; the same daily carcases, and the same crows about them.

C. Bas. The demoivre-baronet had a bloody tumble yesterday.

Man. I hope, sir, you had your share of him.

C. Bas. No, faith! I came in when it was all over——I think I just made a couple of bets with him, took up a cool hundred, and so went to the King's Arms.

L. Wrong. What a genteel, easy manner he has! [*Aside.*

Man. A very hopeful acquaintance I have made here. [*Aside.*

Enter Squire RICHARD, *with a wet brown paper on his face.*

Sir Fran. How naw, Dick? what's the matter with thy forehead, lad?

Sq. Rich. I ha' gotten a knock upon't.

L. Wrong. And how did you come by it, you heedless creature?

Sq. Rich. Why, I was but running after sister, and t'other young woman, into a little room just naw; and so with that, they flapt the door full

in my face, and gave me such a whurr here—I thought they had beaten my brains out! so I gut a dab of wet brown paper here to swage it a while.

L. Wrong. They served you right enough! Will you never have done with your horse-play?

Sir Fran. Pooh! never heed it, lad! it will be well by to-morrow—the boy has a strong head!

Man. Yes, truly, his skull seems to be of a comfortable thickness. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Come, Dick, here's cousin Manly ——sir, this is your god-son.

L. Wrong. Oh! here's my daughter too:

Enter Miss JENNY.

Sq. Rich. Honoured gudfether! I crave leave to ask your blessing.

Man. Thou hast it, child—and, if it will do thee any good, may it be to make thee, at least, as wise a man as thy father:

L. Wrong. Miss Jenny! don't you see your cousin, child?

Man. And as for thee, my pretty dear—[*Salutes her.*] may'st thou be, at least, as good a woman as thy mother.

Jen. I wish I may ever be so handsome, sir.

Man. Hah! Miss Pert! Now that's a thought that seems to have been hatcht in the girl on this side Highgate. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Her tongue is a little nimble, sir.

L. Wrong. That's only from her country education, Sir Francis. You know she has been kept too long there——so I brought her to London, sir, to learn a little more reserve and modesty.

Man. O, the best place in the world for it—every woman she meets will teach her something of it——There's the good gentlewoman of the house looks like a knowing person; even she perhaps will be so good as to shew her a little London behaviour.

Moth. Alas, sir, miss won't stand long in need of my instruction.

Man. That I dare say: What thou can'st teach her, she will soon be mistress of. [*Aside.*

Moth. If she does, sir, they shall always be at her service.

L. Wrong. Very obliging indeed, Mrs Motherly.

Sir Fran. Very kind and civil, truly—I think we are got into a mighty good hawse here.

Man. O yes, and very friendly company.

C. Bas. Humh! 'Egad I don't like his looks—he seems a little smoky—I believe I had as good brush off——If I stay, I don't know but he may ask me some odd questions.

Man. Well, sir, I believe you and I do but hinder the family—

C. Bas. It's very true, sir—I was just thinking of going—He don't care to leave me, I see: But it's no matter, we have time enough. [*Aside.*] And so, ladies, without ceremony, your humble servant. [*Exit Count* BASSET, *and drops a letter.*

L. Wrong. Ha! what paper's this? Some billet-doux I'll lay my life, but this is no place to examine it. [*Puts it in her pocket.*

Sir Fran. Why in such haste, cousin?

Man. O! my lady must have a great many affairs upon her hands after such a journey.

L. Wrong. I believe, sir, I shall not have much less every day, while I stay in this town, of one sort or other.

Man. Why truly, ladies seldom want employment here, madam.

Jen. And mamma did not come to it to be idle, sir.

Man. Nor you neither, I dare say, my young mistress.

Jen. I hope not, sir.

Man. Ha! Miss Mettle!——Where are you going, sir?

Sir Fran. Only to see you to the door, sir.

Man. Oh! Sir Francis, I love to come and go, without ceremony.

Sir Fran. Nay, sir, I must do as you will have me—Your humble servant. [*Exit* MANLY.

Jen. This cousin Manly, papa, seems to be but of an odd sort of a crusty humour—I don't like him half so well as the count.

Sir Fran. Pooh! that's another thing, child. Cousin is a little proud indeed; but, however, you must always be civil to him, for he has a deal of money, and nobody knows who he may give it to.

L. Wrong. Pshaw! a fig for his money! you have so many projects of late about money, since you are a parliament man: What! we must make ourselves slaves to his impertinent humours, eight or ten years perhaps, in hopes to be his heirs, and then he will be just old enough to marry his maid.

Moth. Nay, for that matter, madam, the town says he is going to be married already.

Sir Fran. Who? Cousin Manly?

L. Wrong. To whom, pray?

Moth. Why, is it possible your ladyship should know nothing of it?—to my Lord Townly's sister, Lady Grace.

L. Wrong. Lady Grace?

Moth. Dear madam, it has been in the newspapers!

L. Wrong. I don't like that neither.

Sir Fran. Naw, I do; for then it's likely it mayn't be true.

L. Wrong. [*Aside.*] If it is not too far gone, at least it may be worth one's while to throw a rub in his way.

Sq. Rich. Pray, feyther, haw lung will it be to supper?

Sir Fran. Odso! that's true! step to the cook, lad, and ask what she can get us.

Moth. If you please, sir, I'll order one of my maids to shew her where she may have any thing you have a mind to.

Sir Fran. Thank you kindly, Mrs Motherly.

Sq. Rich. Ods-flesh! what, is not it i' the hawse yet?—I shall be famished—but howld! I'll go

and ask Doll, an there's none o'the goose poy left.

Sir Fran. Do so; and, do'st hear, Dick——see if there's e'er a bottle o'th' strong beer that came i'th' coach with us—if there be, clap a toast in it, and bring it up.

Sq. Rich. With a little nutmeg and sugar, shawn't I, feyther?

Sir Fran. Ay! ay! as thee and I always drink it for breakfast—Go thy ways——and I'll fill a pipe i'th' mean while. [*Takes one from a pocket-case, and fills it.* [*Exit Sq.* RICH.

L. Wrong. This boy is always thinking of his belly!

Sir Fran. Why, my dear, you may allow him to be a little hungry after his journey.

L. Wrong. Nay, e'en breed him your own way—he has been cramming in or out of the coach all this day I am sure—I wish my poor girl could eat a quarter as much.

Jen. O, as for that, I could eat a great deal more, mamma, but then, mayhap, I should grow coarse, like him, and spoil my shape.

L. Wrong. Ay, so thou would'st, my dear.

Enter Squire RICHARD *with a full tankard.*

Sq. Rich. Here, feyther, I ha' brought it——it's well I went as I did; for our Doll had just baked a toast, and was going to drink it herself.

Sir Fran. Why then, here's to thee, Dick! [*Drinks.*

Sq. Rich. Thank you, feyther.

L. Wrong. Lord, Sir Francis! I wonder you can encourage the boy to swill so much of that lubberly liquor—it's enough to make him quite stupid.

Sq. Rich. Why it never hurts me, mother; and I sleep like a hawnd after it. [*Drinks.*

Sir Fran. I am sure I ha' drunk it these thirty years, and, by your leave, madam, I don't know that I want wit: Ha! ha!

Jen. But you might have had a great deal more, papa, if you would have been governed by my mother.

Sir Fran. Daughter! he that is governed by his wife has no wit at all.

Jen. Then I hope I shall marry a fool, sir: for I love to govern dearly.

Sir Fran. You are too pert, child; it don't do well in a young woman.

L. Wrong. Pray, Sir Francis, don't snub her; she has a fine growing spirit, and if you check her so, you will make her as dull as her brother here.

Sq. Rich. [*After a long draught.*] Indeed, mother, I think my sister is too forward.

Jen. You! you think I'm too forward! sure, brother Mud, your head's too heavy to think of any thing but your belly.

L. Wrong. Well said, miss; he's none of your master, though he is your elder brother.

Sq. Rich. No, nor she shawn't be my mistress, while she's younger sister!

Sir Fran. Well said, Dick! shew 'em that stawt liquor makes a stawt heart, lad!

Sq. Rich. So I will! and I'll drink ageen, for all her! [*Drinks.*

Enter JOHN MOODY.

Sir Fran. So, John! how are the horses?

J. Mood. Troth, sir, I ha' noa good opinion o' this tawn; it's made up o' mischief, I think!

Sir Fran. What's the matter naw?

J. Mood. Why I'll tell your worship—before we were gotton to th' street end with the coach here, a great luggerheaded cart, with wheels as thick as a brick wall, laid hawld on't, and has poo'd it aw to bits: Crack went the perch! Down goes the coach! and whang! says the glasses, all to shivers! Marcy upon us! and this be London, would we were aw weell in the country ageen!

Jen. What have you to do to wish us all in the country again, Mr Lubber? I hope we shall not go into the country again these seven years, mamma; let twenty coaches be pull'd to pieces.

Sir Fran. Hold your tongue, Jenny!—Was Roger in no fault in all this?

J. Mood. Noa, sir, nor I, noather——Are not you asheam'd, says Roger to the carter, to do such an unkind thing by strangers? Noa, says he, you bumkin. Sir, he did the thing on very purpose! and so the folks said that stood by—Very well, says Roger, yow shall see what our meyster will say to ye! Your meyster? says he; your meyster may kiss my—and so he clapt his hand just there, and like your worship. Flesh! I thought they had better breeding in this tawn.

Sir Fran. I'll teach this rascal some, I'll warrant him! Odsbud! if I take him in hand, I'll play the devil with him.

Sq. Rich. Ay do, feyther; have him before the parliament.

Sir Fran. Odsbud! and so I will——I will make him know who I am! Where does he live?

J. Mood. I believe, in London, sir.

Sir Fran. What's the rascal's name?

J. Mood. I think I heard somebody call him Dick.

Sq. Rich. What, my name?

Sir Fran. Where did he go?

J. Mood. Sir, he went home.

Sir Fran. Where's that?

J. Mood. By my troth, sir, I doan't know! I heard him say he would cross the same street again to-morrow; and if we had a mind to stand in his way, he wou'd pool us over and over again.

Sir Fran. Will he so? Odsnooks! get me a constable.

L. Wrong. Pooh! get you a good supper. Come, Sir Francis, don't put yourself in a heat for what cann't be helpt. Accidents will happen to people that travel abroad to see the world—For my part, I think it's a mercy it was not overturn'd before we were all out on't.

Sir Fran. Why ay, that's true again, my dear.

L. Wrong. Therefore see to-morrow if we can buy one at second-hand, for present use: so bespeak a new one, and then all's easy.

J. Mood. Why troth, sir, I doan't think this could have held you above a day longer.

Sir Fran. D'ye think so, John?

J. Mood. Why you ha' had it ever since your worship were high sheriff.

Sir Fran. Why then go and see what Doll has got us for supper—and come and get off my boots.

[*Exit Sir* FRAN.

L. Wrong. In the mean time, miss, do you step to Handy, and bid her get me some fresh night-clothes. [*Exit Lady* WRONG.

Jen. Yes, mamma, and some for myself too.

[*Exit* JENNY.

Sq. Rich. Odsflesh! and what mun I do all alone?

I'll e'en seek out where t'other pratty miss is,
And she and I'll go play at cards for kisses.

[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Lord* TOWNLY'S *House.*

Enter Lord TOWNLY, *a Servant attending.*

Ld Town. Who's there?

Serv. My Lord.

Ld Town. Bid them get dinner—Lady Grace, your servant.

Enter Lady GRACE.

L. Grace. What, is the house up already? My lady is not drest yet!

Ld Town. No matter—it's three o'clock—she may break my rest, but she shall not alter my hours.

L. Grace. Nay, you need not fear that now, for she dines abroad.

Ld Town. That, I suppose, is only an excuse for her not being ready yet.

L. Grace. No, upon my word, she is engaged to company.

Ld Town. Where, pray?

L. Grace. At my Lady Revel's; and you know they never dine till supper-time.

Ld Town. No truly——she is one of those orderly ladies, who never let the sun shine upon any of their vices!——But pr'ythee, sister, what humour is she in to-day?

L. Grace. O! in tip-top spirits, I can assure you——she won a good deal last night.

Ld Town. I know no difference between her winning or losing, while she continues her course of life.

L. Grace. However, she is better in good humour than bad.

Ld Town. Much alike: When she is in good humour, other people only are the better for it: When in a very ill humour, then, indeed, I seldom fail to have my share of her.

L. Grace. Well, we won't talk of that now ——Does any body dine here?

Ld Town. Manly promised me—By the way, madam, what do you think of his last conversation?

L. Grace. ——I am a little at a stand about it.

Ld Town. How so?

L. Grace. Why——I don't know how he can ever have any thoughts of me, that could lay down such severe rules upon wives in my hearing.

Ld Town. Did you think his rules unreasonable?

L. Grace. I cann't say I did: But he might have had a little more complaisance before me, at least.

Ld Town. Complaisance is only a proof of good breeding: But his plainness was a certain proof of his honesty; nay, of his good opinion of you: For he would never have open'd himself so freely, but in confidence that your good sense could not be disobliged at it.

L. Grace. My good opinion of him, brother, has hitherto been guided by yours: But I have received a letter this morning that shews him a very different man from what I thought him.

Ld Town. A letter from whom?

L. Grace. That I don't know, but there it is.

[*Gives a letter.*

Ld. Town. Pray let's see. [*Reads.*

"The inclosed, madam, fell accidentally into my hands; if it no way concerns you, you will only have the trouble of reading this, from your sincere friend and humble servant, Unknown," &c.

L. Grace. And this was the inclosed.

[*Giving another.*

Ld Town. [*Reads.*] To Charles Manly, Esq. "Your manner of living with me of late, convinces me, that I now grow as painful to you as to myself: but, however, though you can love me no longer, I hope you will not let me live worse than I did before I left an honest income, for the vain hopes of being ever yours.

MYRTILLA DUPE."

"P. S. 'Tis above four months since I received a shilling from you."

L. Grace. What think you now?

Ld Town. I am considering——

L. Grace. You see it's directed to him.

Ld Town. That's true! but the postscript seems to be a reproach, that I think he is not capable of deserving.

L. Grace. But who could have concern enough to send it to me?

Ld Town. I have observed that these sort of letters from unknown friends generally come from secret enemies.

L. Grace. What would you have me do in it?

Ld Town. What I think you ought to do——fairly shew it him, and say I advised you to it.

L. Grace. Will not that have a very odd look from me?

Ld Town. Not at all, if you use my name in it: if he is innocent, his impatience to appear so will discover his regard to you: If he is guilty, it will be your best way of preventing his addresses.

L. Grace. But what pretence have I to put him out of countenance?

Ld Town. I cann't think there's any fear of that.

L. Grace. Pray what is't you do think then?

Ld Town. Why certainly, that it's much more probable this letter may be all an artifice, than that he is in the least concern'd in it——

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Mr Manly, my lord.

Ld Town. Do you receive him; while I step a minute in to my lady. [*Exit Lord* TOWNLY.

Enter MANLY.

Man. Madam, your most obedient; they told me my lord was here.

L. Grace. He will be here presently: He is but just gone in to my sister.

Man. So! then my lady dines with us?

L. Grace. No; she is engaged.

Man. I hope you are not of her party, madam?

L. Grace. Not till after dinner.

Man. And pray how may she have disposed of the rest of the day?

L. Grace. Much as usual: She has visits till about eight; after that, till court time, she is to be at quadrille, at Mrs Idle's: After the drawing room, she takes a short supper with my Lady Moonlight; and from thence they go together to my Lord Noble's assembly.

Man. And are you to do all this with her, madam?

L. Grace. Only a few of the visits: I would indeed have drawn her to the play, but I doubt we have so much upon our hands, that it will not be practicable.

Man. But how can you forbear all the rest of it?

L. Grace. There's no great merit in forbearing what one is not charm'd with.

Man. And yet I have found that very difficult in my time.

L. Grace. How do you mean?

Man. Why, I have pass'd a great deal of my life in the hurry of the ladies, though I was generally better pleased when I was at quiet without 'em.

L. Grace. What induced you, then, to be with them?

Man. Idleness and the fashion.

L. Grace. No mistresses in the case?

Man. To speak honestly—Yes—being often in the toyshop, there was no forbearing the baubles.

L. Grace. And of course, I suppose, sometimes you were tempted to pay for them twice as much as they were worth.

Man. Why really, where fancy only makes the choice, madam, no wonder if we are generally bubbled, in those sort of bargains, which, I confess, has been often my case: for I had constantly some coquette, or other, upon my hands, whom I could love perhaps just enough to put it in her power to plague me.

L. Grace. And that's a power, I doubt, commonly made use of.

Man. The amours of a coquette, madam, seldom have any other view. I look upon them and prudes to be nuisances, just alike; though they seem very different: The first are always plaguing the men, and the other are always abusing the women.

L. Grace. And yet both of them do it for the same vain ends; to establish a false character of being virtuous.

Man. Of being chaste, they mean; for they know no other virtue: and, upon the credit of that, they traffic in every thing else that's vicious: they (even against nature) keep their chastity, only because they find they have more power to do mischief with it, than they could possibly put in practice without it.

L. Grace. Hold, Mr Manly! I am afraid this severe opinion of the sex is owing to the ill choice you have made of your mistresses.

Man. In a great measure it may be so: But, madam, if both these characters are so odious, how vastly valuable is that woman who has attained all they aim at without the aid of the folly or vice of either.

L. Grace. I believe those sort of women to be as scarce, sir, as the men that believe there are any such; or that, allowing such, have virtue enough to deserve them.

Man. That *could* deserve them then——had been a more favourable reflection.

L. Grace. Nay, I speak only from my little experience: for (I'll be free with you, Mr Manly) I don't know a man in the world, that, in appearance, might better pretend to a woman of the first merit, than yourself: and yet I have a reason in my hand here to think you have your failings.

Man. I have infinite, madam; but I am sure the want of an implicit respect for you is not among the number—Pray what is in your hand, madam?

L. Grace. Nay, sir, I have no title to it; for the direction is to you. [*Gives him a letter.*

Man. To me! I don't remember the hand— [*Reads to himself.*

L. Grace. I cann't perceive any change of guilt in him, and his surprise seems natural. [*Aside.*] ——Give me leave to tell you one thing by the way, Mr Manly; that I should never have shewn you this, but that my brother enjoined me to it.

Man. I take that to proceed from my lord's good opinion of me, madam.

L. Grace. I hope, at least, it will stand as an excuse for my taking this liberty.

Man. I never yet saw you do any thing, madam, that wanted an excuse; and, I hope, you

will not give me an instance to the contrary, by refusing the favour I am going to ask you.

L. Grace. I don't believe I shall refuse any that you think proper to ask.

Man. Only this, madam, to indulge me so far, as to let me know how this letter came into your hands.

L. Grace. Inclosed to me in this, without a name.

Man. If there be no secret in the contents, madam——

L. Grace. Why—there is an impertinent insinuation in it: but, as I know your good sense will think it so too, I will venture to trust you.

Man. You'll oblige me, madam.

[*He takes the other letter and reads.*

L. Grace. [*Aside.*] Now am I in the oddest situation! methinks our conversation grows terribly critical! This must produce something:—O lud! would it were over!

Man. Now, madam, I begin to have some light into the poor project that is at the bottom of all this.

L. Grace. I have no notion of what could be proposed by it!

Man. A little patience, madam——First, as to the insinuation you mention——

L. Grace. O! what is he going to say now! [*Aside.*

Man. Though my intimacy with my lord may have allowed my visits to have been very frequent here of late, yet, in such a talking town as this, you must not wonder, if a great many of those visits are placed to your account: and this taken for granted, I suppose has been told to my Lady Wronghead, as a piece of news, since her arrival, not improbably without many more imaginary circumstances.

L. Grace. My Lady Wronghead!

Man. Ay, madam, for I am positive this is her hand.

L. Grace. What view could she have in writing it?

Man. To interrupt any treaty of marriage she may have heard I am engaged in: because, if I die without heirs, her family expects that some part of my estate may return to them again. But, I hope, she is so far mistaken, that, if this letter has given you the least uneasiness——I shall think that the happiest moment of my life.

L. Grace. That does not carry your usual complaisance, Mr Manly.

Man. Yes, madam, because I am sure I can convince you of my innocence.

L. Grace. I am sure I have no right to inquire into it.

Man. Suppose you may not, madam, yet you may very innocently have so much curiosity.

L. Grace. With what an artful gentleness he steals into my opinion! [*Aside.*] Well, sir, I won't pretend to have so little of the woman in me as to want curiosity—But pray, do you suppose then, this Myrtilla is a real or a fictitious name?

Man. Now I recollect, madam, there is a young woman in the house, where my Lady Wronghead lodges, that I heard somebody call Myrtilla: this letter may be written by her—but how it came directed to me, I confess is a mystery, that, before I ever presume to see your ladyship again, I think myself obliged, in honour, to find out. [*Going.*

L. Grace. Mr Manly——you are not going?

Man. 'Tis but to the next street, madam; I shall be back in ten minutes.

L. Grace. Nay! but dinner's just coming up.

Man. Madam, I can neither eat nor rest till I see an end of this affair!

L. Grace. But this is so odd! Why should any silly curiosity of mine drive you away?

Man. Since you won't suffer it to be yours, madam, then it shall be only to satisfy my own curiosity—— [*Exit* MANLY.

L. Grace. Well—and now, what am I to think of all this? Or, suppose an indifferent person had heard every word we have said to one another, what would they have thought on't? Would it have been very absurd to conclude, he is seriously inclined to pass the rest of his life with me?—I hope not—for I am sure, the case is terribly clear on my side; and why may not I, without vanity, suppose my—unaccountable somewhat—has done as much execution upon him?—Why—because he never told me so—nay, he has not so much as mentioned the word love, or ever said one civil thing to my person—Well—but he has said a thousand to my good opinion, and has certainly got it—Had he spoke first to my person, he had paid a very ill compliment to my understanding—I should have thought him impertinent, and never have troubled my head about him; but, as he has managed the matter, at least I am sure of one thing; that, let his thoughts be what they will, I shall never trouble my head about any other man as long as I live.

Enter Mrs TRUSTY.

Well, Mrs Trusty, is my sister dressed yet?

Trus. Yes, madam; but my lord has been courting her so, I think, till they are both out of humour.

L. Grace. How so?

Trus. Why, it begun, madam, with his lordship's desiring her ladyship to dine at home today—upon which my lady said she could not be ready; upon that, my lord ordered them to stay the dinner, and then my lady ordered the coach; then my lord took her short, and said, he had ordered the coachman to set up: then my lady made him a great curtsey, and said, she would wait till his lordship's horses had dined, and was mighty pleasant: but, for fear of the worst, madam, she whispered me—to get her chair ready. [*Exit* TRUSTY.

L. Grace. O! here they come; and, by their looks, seem a little unfit for company. [*Exit Lady* GRACE.

Enter Lady TOWNLY, *Lord* TOWNLY *following.*

Lady Town. Well! look you, my lord; I can

bear it no longer! nothing still but about my faults, my faults! an agreeable subject truly!

Ld Town. Why, madam, if you won't hear of them, how can I ever hope to see you mend them?

Lady Town. Why, I don't intend to mend them—I cann't mend them—you know I have tried to do it an hundred times, and—it hurts me so—I cann't bear it!

Ld Town. And I, madam, cann't bear this daily licentious abuse of your time and character.

Lady Town. Abuse! Astonishing! when the universe knows I am never better company, than when I am doing what I have a mind to! But to see this world! that men can never get over that silly spirit of contradiction—Why, but last Thursday now—there you wisely amended one of my faults, as you call them—you insisted upon my not going to the masquerade—and pray, what was the consequence? was not I as cross as the devil all the night after? was not I forced to get company at home? and was not it almost three o'clock in the morning before I was able to come to myself again? and then the fault is not mended neither,—for next time, I shall only have twice the inclination to go: so that all this mending and mending, you see, is but darning an old ruffle, to make it worse than it was before.

Ld Town. Well, the manner of women's living, of late, is insupportable; and, one way or other—

Lady Town. It's to be mended, I suppose? Why so it may; but then, my dear lord, you must give one time—and when things are at worst, you know, they may mend themselves; ha, ha.

Ld Town. Madam, I am not in a humour now to trifle.

Lady Town. Why then, my lord, one word of fair argument—to talk with you your own way now—You complain of my late hours, and I of your early ones—so far are we even, you'll allow—but pray which gives us the best figure in the eye of the polite world, my active, spirited three in the morning, or your dull drowsy eleven at night? Now, I think one has the air of a woman of quality, and t'other of a plodding mechanic, that goes to bed betimes, that he may rise early to open his shop!—Faugh!

Ld Town. Fie, fie, madam! is this your way of reasoning? 'tis time to wake you then—'Tis not your ill hours alone that disturb me, but as often the ill company, that occasion those ill hours.

Lady Town. Sure I don't understand you now, my lord; what ill company do I keep?

Ld Town. Why, at best, women that lose their money, and men that win it; or, perhaps, men that are voluntary bubbles at one game, in hopes a lady will give them fair play at another. Then that unavoidable mixture with known rakes, concealed thieves, and sharpers in embroidery—or what, to me, is still more shocking, that herd of familiar, chattering, crop-eared coxcombs, who are so often like monkeys, there would be no knowing them asunder, but that their tails hang from their head, and the monkey's grows where it should do.

Lady Town. And a husband must give eminent proof of his sense, that thinks their powder-puffs dangerous.

Ld Town. Their being fools, madam, is not always the husband's security: Or, if it were, fortune sometimes gives them advantages might make a thinking woman tremble.

Lady Town. What do you mean?

Ld Town. That women sometimes lose more than they are able to pay; and, if a creditor be a little pressing, the lady may be reduced to try if, instead of gold, the gentleman will accept of a trinket.

Lady Town. My lord, you grow scurrilous; you'll make me hate you. I'll have you to know, I keep company with the politest people in town, and the assemblies I frequent are full of such.

Ld Town. So are the churches——now and then.

Lady Town. My friends frequent them too, as well as the assemblies.

Ld Town. Yes, and would do it oftner, if a groom of the chambers there were allowed to furnish cards to the company.

Lady Town. I see what you drive at all this while; you would lay an imputation on my fame, to cover your own avarice: I might take any pleasures, I find, that were not expensive.

Ld Town. Have a care, madam; don't let me think you only value your chastity, to make me reproachable for not indulging you in every thing; else that's vicious——I, madam, have a reputation too to guard, that's dear to me as yours—The follies of an ungoverned wife may make the wisest man uneasy; but 'tis his own fault, if ever they make him contemptible.

Lady Town. My lord——you would make a woman mad!

Ld Town. You'd make a man a fool.

Lady Town. If heaven has made you otherwise, that won't be in my power.

Ld Town. Whatever may be in your inclination, madam, I'll prevent you making me a beggar at least.

Lady Town. A beggar! Cræsus! I'm out of patience! I won't come home till four to-morrow morning.

Ld Town. That may be, madam; but I'll order the doors to be locked at twelve.

Lady Town. Then I won't come home till to-morrow night.

Ld Town. Then, madam——you shall never come home again. [*Exit Lord* Town.

Lady Town. What does he mean? I never heard such a word from him in my life before! the man always used to have manners in his worst humours! there's something, that I don't see, at the bottom of all this—— but his head's always upon some impracticable scheme or other, so I won't trouble mine any longer about him. *Mr Manly*, your servant.

Enter MANLY.

Man. I ask pardon for my intrusion, madam; but I hope my business with my lord will excuse it.

Lady Town. I believe you'll find him in the next room, sir.

Man. Will you give me leave, madam?

Lady Town. Sir——you have my leave, though you were a lady.

Man. [*Aside.*] What a well-bred age do we live in! [*Exit* MANLY.

Enter Lady GRACE.

Lady Town. O! my dear Lady Grace! how could you leave me so unmercifully alone all this while?

L. Grace. I thought my lord had been with you.

Lady Town. Why yes——and therefore I wanted your relief; for he has been in such a fluster here——

L. Grace. Bless me! for what?

Lady Town. Only our usual breakfast; we have each of us had one dish of matrimonial comfort this morning: we have been charming company.

L. Grace. I am mighty glad of it: sure it must be a vast happiness, when a man and a wife can give themselves the same turn of conversation.

Lady Town. O! the prettiest thing in the world!

L. Grace. Now I should be afraid, that, where two people are every day together so, they must often be in want of something to talk upon.

Lady Town. O, my dear, you are the most mistaken in the world! married people have things to talk of, child, that never enter into the imagination of others.——Why, there's my lord and I now, we have not been married above two short years, you know, and we have already eight or ten things constantly in bank, that, whenever we want company, we can take up any one of them for two hours together, and the subject never the flatter; nay, if we have occasion for it, it will be as fresh next day too as it was the first hour it entertained us.

L. Grace. Certainly that must be vastly pretty.

Lady Town. O! there's no life like it! Why t'other day, for example, when you dined abroad, my lord and I, after a pretty chearful tête-a-tête meal, sat us down by the fire-side, in an easy indolent, pick-tooth way, for about a quarter of an hour, as if we had not thought of any other's being in the room——at last stretching himself, and yawning——My dear, says he,——aw——you came home very late last night——'Twas but just turned of two, says I——I was in bed——aw——by eleven, says he; so you are every night, says I——Well, says he, I am amazed you can sit up so late——How can you be amazed, says I, at a thing that happens so often?—upon which we entered into a conversation——and though this is a point has entertained us above fifty times already, we always find so many pretty new things to say upon it, that, I believe in my soul, it will last as long as we live.

L. Grace. But pray, in such sort of family dialogues (though extremely well for passing the time) don't there, now and then, enter some little witty sort of bitterness?

Lady Town. O yes! which does not do amiss at all: a smart repartee, with a zest of recrimination at the head of it, makes the prettiest sherbet. Ay, ay! if we did not mix a little of the acid with it, a matrimonial society would be so luscious, that nothing but an old liquorish prude would be able to bear it.

L. Grace. Well,——certainly you have the most elegant taste——

Lady Town. Though, to tell you the truth, my dear, I rather think we squeezed a little too much lemon into it this bout; for it grew so sour at last, that——I think——I almost told him, he was a fool——and he again——talked something oddly of——turning me out of doors.

L. Grace. O! have a care of that!

Lady Town. Nay, if he should, I may thank my own wise father for that.

L. Grace. How so?

Lady Town. Why——when my good lord first opened his honourable trenches before me, my unaccountable papa, in whose hands I then was, gave me up at discretion.

L. Grace. How do you mean?

Lady Town. He said, the wives of this age were come to that pass, that he would not desire even his own daughter should be trusted with pin-money; so that my whole train of separate inclinations are left entirely at the mercy of an husband's odd humours.

L. Grace. Why, that indeed is enough to make a woman of spirit look about her.

Lady Town. Nay, but to be serious, my dear; what would you really have a woman do in my case?

L. Grace. Why——if I had a sober husband as you have, I would make myself the happiest wife in the world by being as sober as he.

Lady Town. O! you wicked thing! how can you teaze one at this rate? when you know he is so very sober, that (except giving me money) there is not one thing in the world he can do to please me! And I at the same time, partly by nature, and partly, perhaps, by keeping the best company, do with my soul love almost every thing he hates! I dote upon assemblies; my heart bounds at a ball; and at an opera——I expire! Then I love play to distraction; cards enchant me; and dice—put me out of my little wits! Dear! dear hazard! Oh! what a flow of spirits it gives one! Do you never play at hazard, child?

L. Grace. Oh! never! I don't think it sits well upon women; there's something so masculine, so much the air of a rake in it; you see how it makes the men swear and curse; and when a woman is thrown into the same passion——why——

Lady Town. That's very true; one is a little put to it, sometimes, not to make use of the same words to express it.

L. Grace. Well——and, upon ill luck, pray what words are you really forced to make use of?

Lady Town. Why, upon a very hard case, indeed, when a sad wrong word is rising just to one's tongue's end, I give a great gulp———and swallow it.

L. Grace. Well——and is not that enough to make you forswear play as long as you live?

Lady Town. O yes! I have forsworn it.

L. Grace. Seriously?

Lady Town. Solemnly! a thousand times; but then one is constantly forsworn.

L. Grace. And how can you answer that?

Lady Town. My dear, what we say, when we are losers, we look upon to be no more binding than a lover's oath, or a great man's promise. But I beg pardon, child; I should not lead you so far into the world; you are a prude, and design to live soberly.

L. Grace. Why, I confess, my nature, and my education, do, in a good degree, incline me that way.

Lady Town. Well! how a woman of spirit, (for you don't want that, child,) can dream of living soberly, is to me inconceivable! for you will marry, I suppose?

L. Grace. I cann't tell but I may.

Lady Town. And won't you live in town?

L. Grace. Half the year—I should like it very well.

Lady Town. My stars! and you would really live in London half the year to be sober in it?

L. Grace. Why not?

Lady Town. Why cann't you as well go and be sober in the country?

L. Grace. So I would——t'other half year.

Lady Town. And pray, what comfortable scheme of life would you form now for your summer and winter sober entertainments?

L. Grace. A scheme that, I think, might very well content us.

Lady Town. O! of all things let's hear it.

L. Grace. Why, in summer, I could pass my leisure hours in riding, in reading, walking by a canal, or sitting at the end of it under a great tree; in dressing, dining, chatting with an agreeable friend, perhaps hearing a little music, taking a dish of tea, or a game of cards, soberly; managing my family, looking into its accounts, playing with my children, (if I had any,) or in a thousand other innocent amusements——soberly! and possibly, by these means, I might induce my husband to be as sober as myself.

Lady Town. Well, my dear, thou art an astonishing creature! For sure such primitive antediluvian notions of life have not been in any head these thousand years——Under a great tree! O, my soul!——But I beg we may have the sober town-scheme too—for I am charmed with the country one.

L. Grace. You shall, and I'll try to stick to my sobriety there too.

Lady Town. Well, though I'm sure it will give me the vapours, I most hear it however.

L. Grace. Why then, for fear of your fainting, madam, I will first so far come into the fashion, that I would never be dressed out of it——but still it should be soberly. For I cann't think it any disgrace to a woman of my private fortune, not to wear her lace as fine as the wedding-suit of a first duchess. Though there is one extravagance I would venture to come up to.

Lady Town. Ay, now for it———

L. Grace. I would every day be as clean as a bride.

Lady Town. Why the men say, that's a great step to be made one.—Well, now you are dressed—pray let's see to what purpose.

L. Grace. I would visit—that is, my real friends, but as little for form as possible.—I would go to court; sometimes to an assembly, nay, play at quadrille—soberly; I would see all the good plays; and (because 'tis the fashion) now and then an opera—but I would not expire there, for fear I should never go again; and lastly, I cann't say, but, for curiosity, if I liked my company, I might be drawn in once to a masquerade; and this, I think, is as far as any woman can go—soberly.

Lady Town. Well, if it had not been for the last piece of sobriety, I was just going to call for some surfeit water.

L. Grace. Why, don't you think, with the farther aid of breakfasting, dining, taking the air, supping, sleeping, not to say a word of devotion, the four and twenty hours might roll over in a tolerable manner?

Lady Town. Tolerable? Deplorable! Why, child, all you propose is but to endure life; now I want to enjoy it—

Enter Mrs TRUSTY.

Trus. Madam, your ladyship's chair is ready.

Lady Town. Have the footmen their white flambeaux yet? For last night I was poisoned.

Trus. Yes, madam; there were some came in this morning. [*Exit* TRUSTY.

Lady Town. My dear, you will excuse me; but you know my time is so precious——

L. Grace. That I beg I may not hinder your least enjoyment of it.

Lady Town. You will call on me at Lady Revel's?

L. Grace. Certainly.

Lady Town. But I am so afraid it will break into your scheme, my dear!

L. Grace. When it does, I will——soberly break from you.

Lady Town. Why then, till we meet again, dear sister, I wish you all tolerable happiness.

[*Exit Lady* TOWN.

L. Grace. There she goes—dash! into her stream of pleasures. Poor woman! she is really a fine creature, and sometimes infinitely agreeable! Nay, take her out of the madness of this town, rational in her notions, and easy to live with; but she is so borne down by this torrent of vanity in vogue, she thinks every hour of her life is lost that she does not lead at the head of it. What it will end in, I tremble to imagine.—Ha! my brother, and Manly with him! I guess what they have been talking of—I shall hear it in

my turn, I suppose, but it won't become me to be inquisitive. [*Exit Lady* GRACE.

Enter Lord TOWNLY *and* MANLY.

Ld Town. I did not think my lady Wronghead had such a notable brain; though I cann't say she was so very wise, in trusting this silly girl you call Myrtilla with the secret.

Man. No, my lord, you mistake me; had the girl been in the secret, perhaps I had never come at it myself.

Ld Town. Why, I thought you said the girl writ this letter to you, and that my lady Wronghead sent it inclosed to my sister.

Man. If you please to give me leave, my lord ——the fact is thus—This inclosed letter to Lady Grace was a real original one, written by this girl to the count we have been talking of: the count drops it, and my lady Wronghead finds it: then, only changing the cover, she seals it up as a letter of business just written by herself to me, and pretending to be in a hurry, gets this innocent girl to write the direction for her.

Ld Town. Oh, then the girl did not know she was superscribing a billetdoux of her own to you?

Man. No, my lord; for when I first questioned her about the direction, she owned it immediately; but when I shewed her that her letter to the count was within it, and told her how it came into my hands, the poor creature was amazed, and thought herself betrayed both by the count and my lady——in short, upon this discovery the girl and I grew so gracious, that she has let me into some transactions in my lady Wronghead's family, which, with my having a careful eye over them, may prevent the ruin of it.

Ld Town. You are very generous to be so solicitous for a lady that has given you so much uneasiness.

Man. But I will be most unmercifully revenged of her; for I will do her the greatest friendship in the world—against her will.

Ld Town. What an uncommon philosophy art thou master of, to make even thy malice a virtue!

Man. Yet, my lord, I assure you there is no one action of my life gives me more pleasure than your approbation of it.

Ld Town. Dear Charles, my heart's impatient till thou art nearer to me; and as a proof that I have long wished thee so—while your daily conduct has chosen rather to deserve than ask my sister's favour, I have been as secretly industrious to make her sensible of your merit; and since on this occasion you have opened your whole heart to me, 'tis now with equal pleasure I assure you we have both succeeded. She is as firmly yours—

Man. Impossible! You flatter me!

Ld Town. I'm glad you think it flattery; but she herself shall prove it none. She dines with us alone. When the servants are withdrawn, I'll open a conversation that shall excuse my leaving you together.—O! Charles! had I, like thee, been cautious in my choice, what melancholy hours had this heart avoided!

Man. No more of that, I beg, my lord.

Ld Town. But 'twill, at least, be some relief to my anxiety, (however barren of content the state has been to me,) to see so near a friend and sister happy in it. Your harmony of life will be an instance how much the choice of temper is preferable to beauty.

While your soft hours in mutual kindness move,
You'll reach by virtue what I lost by love.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Mrs* MOTHERLY'S *House.*

Enter Mrs MOTHERLY, *meeting* MYRTILLA.

Moth. So, niece! where is it possible you can have been these six hours?

Myr. O, madam, I have such a terrible story to tell you!

Moth. A story! Ods my life! What have you done with the count's note of five hundred pound I sent you about? Is it safe? is it good? is it security?

Myr. Yes, yes, it is safe; but for its goodness ——Mercy on us! I have been in a fair way to be hanged about it.

Moth. The dickens! Has the rogue of a count played us another trick then?

Myr. You shall hear, madam. When I came to Mr Cash the banker's, and shewed him his note for five hundred pounds, payable to the count, or order, in two months, he looked earnestly upon it, and desired me to step into the inner room, while he examined his books. After I had staid about ten minutes, he came in to me, claps to the door, and charges me with a constable for forgery.

Moth. Ah, poor soul! And how didst thou get off?

Myr. While I was ready to sink in this condition, I begged him to have a little patience, till I could send for Mr Manly, whom he knew to be a gentleman of worth and honour; and who, I was sure, would convince him, whatever fraud might be in the note, that I was myself an innocent, abused woman—and as good [illegible] would have it, in less than half an hour Mr Manly came—so, without mincing the matter, I fairly told him upon what design the count had lodged that note in your hands, and, in short, laid open the whole scheme he had drawn us into, to make our fortune.

Moth. The devil you did!

Myr. Why, how do you think it was possible I could any otherways make Mr Manly my friend, to help me out of the scrape I was in? To conclude, he soon made Mr Cash easy, and sent away the constable; nay, farther, he promised me, if I would trust the note in his hands, he would take care it should be fully paid before it was due, and at the same time would give me an ample revenge upon the count; so that all you have to consider now, madam, is, whether you think yourself safer in the count's hands, or Mr Manly's.

Moth. Nay, nay, child; there is no choice in the matter: Mr Manly may be a friend indeed, if any thing in our power can make him so.

Myr. Well, madam, and now pray how stand matters at home here? What has the count done with the ladies?

Moth. Why, every thing he has a mind to do, by this time, I suppose. He is in as high favour with miss, as he is with my lady.

Myr. Pray, where are the ladies?

Moth. Rattling abroad in their own coach, and the well-bred count along with them. They have been scouring all the shops in town over, buying fine things and new clothes from morning to night. They have made one voyage already, and have brought home such a cargo of baubles and trumpery—mercy on the poor man that's to pay for them!

Myr. Did not the young squire go with them?

Moth. No, no; miss said, truly he would but disgrace their party; so they even left him asleep by the kitchen fire.

Myr. Has not he asked after me all this while? for I had a sort of an assignation with him.

Moth. O yes, he has been in a bitter taking about it. At last his disappointment grew so uneasy, that he fairly fell a-crying; so, to quiet him, I sent one of the maids and John Moody abroad with him, to show him—the lions and the monument. Ods me! there he is just come home again—you may have business with him—so I'll even turn you together. [*Exit.*

Enter Squire RICHARD.

Sq. Rich. Soah! soah! Mrs Myrtilla, where han yow been aw this day, forsooth?

Myr. Nay, if you go to that, squire, where have you been, pray?

Sq. Rich. Why, when I fun' at yow were no loikly to come whoam, I were ready to hong mysel—so John Moody and I, and one o' your lasses, have been—Lord knows where—a seeing o' the soights.

Myr. Well, and pray what have you seen, sir?

Sq. Rich. Flesh! I cawn't tell, not I——seen every thing, I think. First there we went o' top o' the what-d'ye-call-it there—the great huge stone post, up the rawnd and rawnd stairs, that twine and twine about, just an as thof it was a cork screw.

Myr. O, the monument! Well, and was it not a fine sight from the top of it?

Sq. Rich. Sight, miss! I know no'——I saw nowght but smoke, and brick housen, and steeple tops—then there was such a mortal ting-tang of bells, and rumbling of carts and coaches, and then the folks under one looked so small, and made such a hum and a buz, it put me in mind of my mother's great glass bee-hive in our garden i' the country.

Myr. I think, master, you give a very good account of it.

Sq. Rich. Ay, but I did no' like it; for my head—my head—began to turn—so I trundled me down stairs agen like a round trencher.

Myr. Well, but this was not all you saw, I suppose?

Sq. Rich. Noa, noa; we went, after that, and saw the lions, and I liked them better by hawf: they are pure grim devils: Hoh, hoh! I touked a stick, and gave one of them such a poke o' the noase—I believe he would ha' snapt my head off an he could ha' got me. Hoh! hoh! hoh!

Myr. Well, master, when you and I go abroad, I'll shew you prettier sights than these—there's a masquerade to-morrow.

Sq. Rich. O laud! Ay, they say that's a rare thing for Merry Andrews, and those sort of comical mummers——and the count tells me that there lads and lasses may jig their tails, and eat and drink without grudging, all night long.

Myr. What would you say now, if I should get you a ticket, and go along with you?

Sq. Rich. Ah dear!

Myr. But have a care, squire; the fine ladies there are terribly tempting: look well to your heart, or, ads me! they'll whip it up in the trip of a minute.

Sq. Rich. Ay, but they cawn't thoa—soa let 'um look to themselves—an' ony of 'um falls in love with me, mayhap they had as good be quiet.

Myr. Why, sure, you would not refuse a fine lady, would you?

Sq. Rich. Ay, but I would though, unless it were—one 'at I know of.

Myr. Oh! oh! then you have left your heart in the country, I find?

Sq. Rich. Noa, noa—my heart—eh—my heart e'nt awt o' this room.

Myr. I am glad you have it about you, however.

Sq. Rich. Nay, mayhap not soa noather; somebody else may have it, 'at you little think of.

Myr. I cann't imagine what you mean.

Sq. Rich. Noa! Why, don't you know how many folks there is in this room naw?

Myr. Very fine, master! I see you have learnt the town gallantry already.

Sq. Rich. Why doan't you believe 'at I have a kindness for you then?

Myr. Fie, fie, master, how you talk! Beside, you are too young to think of a wife.

Sq. Rich. Ay, but I cawn't help thinking o' yow, for all that.

Myr. How? Why, sure, sir, you don't pretend to think of me in a dishonourable way?

Sq. Rich. Nay, that's as you see good—I did no' think 'at you would ha' thowght of me for a husband, mayhap, unless I had means in my own

hands; and feyther allows me but half-a-crown a-week, as yet a while.

Myr. O, when I like any body, 'tis not want of money will make me refuse them.

Sq. Rich. Well, that's just my mind now; for 'an I like a girl, miss, I would take her in her smock.

Myr. Ay, master, now you speak like a man of honour: This shews something of a true heart in you.

Sq. Rich. Ay, and a true heart you'll find me, try when you will.

Myr. Hush, hush; here's your papa come home, and my aunt with him.

Sq. Rich. A devil rive 'em! What do they come naw for?

Myr. When you and I get to the masquerade, you shall see what I'll say to you.

Sq. Rich. Well, hands upon't then.

Myr. There.

Sq. Rich. One buss, and a bargain. [*Kisses her.*] Ads wauntlikins! as soft and plump as a marrow-pudding. [*Exeunt severally.*

Enter Sir FRANCIS WRONGHEAD *and Mrs* MOTHERLY.

Sir Fran. What! my wife and daughter abroad, say you?

Moth. O, dear sir, they have been mighty busy all the day long; they just came home to snap up a short dinner, and so went out again.

Sir Fran. Well, well, I sha'n't stay supper for 'em, I can tell 'em that: For, ods-heart! I have had nothing in me but a toast and tankard since morning.

Moth. I am afraid, sir, these late parliament hours won't agree with you.

Sir Fran. Why, truly, Mrs Motherly, they don't do right with us country gentlemen: to lose one meal out of three, is a hard tax upon a good stomach.

Moth It is so, indeed, sir.

Sir Fran. But, howsomever, Mrs Motherly, when we consider that what we suffer is for the good of our country——

Moth. Why, truly, sir, that is something.

Sir Fran. Oh! there's a great deal to be said for't—the good of one's country is above all things ——a true-hearted Englishman thinks nothing too much for it——I have heard of some honest gentlemen so very zealous, that for the good of their country——they would sometimes go to dinner at midnight.

Moth. O! the goodness of 'em! Sure their country must have a vast esteem for them?

Sir Fran. So they have, Mrs Motherly; they are so respected when they come home to their boroughs, after a session, and so beloved——that their country will come and dine with them every day in the week.

Moth. Dear me! What a fine thing 'tis to be so populous!

Sir Fran. It is a great comfort, indeed! and I can assure you you are a good sensible woman, Mrs Motherly.

Moth. O, dear sir, your honour's pleased to compliment.

Sir Fran. No, no; I see you know how to value people of consequence.

Moth. Good lack! here's company, sir. Will you give me leave to get you a little something 'till the ladies come home, sir?

Sir Fran. Why, troth, I don't think it would be amiss.

Moth. It shall be done in a moment, sir.

[*Exit.*

Enter MANLY.

Man. Sir Francis, your servant.

Sir Fran. Cousin Manly!

Man. I am come to see how the family goes on here.

Sir Fran. Troth! all as busy as bees: I have been upon the wing ever since eight o'clock this morning.

Man. By your early hour, then, I suppose you have been making your court to some of the great men.

Sir Fran. Why, faith, you have hit it, sir—I was advised to lose no time: So I e'en went straight forward, to one great man I had never seen in my life before.

Man. Right! That was doing business: But who had you got to introduce you?

Sir Fran. Why, nobody—I remembered I had heard a wise man say—My son, be bold—so, troth, I introduced myself.

Man. As how, pray?

Sir Fran. Why, thus——Look ye——Please your lordship, says I, I am Sir Francis Wrong-head of Bumper-Hall, and member of parliament for the borough of Guzzledown.—Sir, your humble servant, says my lord; thof I have not the honour to know your person, I have heard you are a very honest gentleman, and I am glad your borough has made choice of so worthy a representative; and so, says he, Sir Francis, have you any service to command me? Naw, cousin, those last words, you may be sure, gave me no small encouragement. And thof I know, sir, you have no extraordinary opinion of my parts, yet I believe you won't say I mist it naw!

Man. Well, I hope I shall have no cause.

Sir Fran So when I found him so courteous ——My lord, says I, I did not think to ha' troubled your lordship with business upon my first visit; but since your lordship is pleased not to stand upon ceremony——why, truly, says I, I think naw is as good as another time.

Man. Right! There you pushed him home.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, I had a mind to let him see that I was none of your meally-mouthed ones.

Man. Very good!

Sir Fran. So, in short, my lord, says I, I have a good estate—but—a—it's a little awt at elbows; and as I desire to serve my king, as well as my country, I shall be very willing to accept of a place at court.

Man. So! This was making short work on't.

Sir Fran. I'cod! I shot him flying, cousin: some of your half-witted ones, naw, wou'd ha'

hummed, and hawed, and dangled a month or two after him, before they durst open their mouths about a place, and, mayhap, not ha' got it at last neither.

Man. Oh! I'm glad you're so sure on't.

Sir Fran. You shall hear, cousin.——Sir Francis, says my lord, pray what sort of a place may you ha' turned your thoughts upon? My lord, says I, beggars must not be chusers; but ony place, says I, about a thousand a-year, will be well enough to be doing with 'till something better falls in—for I thought it would not look well to stand haggling with him at first.

Man. No, no, your business was to get footing any way.

Sir Fran. Right! there's it! Ay, cousin, I see you know the world.

Man. Yes, yes, one sees more of it every day ——Well, but what said my lord to all this?

Sir Fran. Sir Francis, says he, I shall be glad to serve you any way that lies in my power; so he gave me a squeeze by the hand, as much as to say, give yourself no trouble—I'll do your business: with that he turned him about to somebody with a coloured ribbon across here, that looked, in my thowghts, as if he came for a place too.

Man. Ha! So upon these hopes you are to make your fortune!

Sir Fran. Why, do you think there's ony doubt of it, sir?

Man. Oh no, I have not the least doubt about it—for just as you have done, I made my fortune ten years ago.

Sir Fran. Why, I never knew you had a place, cousin.

Man. Nor I neither, upon my faith, cousin. But you, perhaps, may have better fortune; for I suppose my lord has heard of what importance you were in the debate to-day—You have been since down at the house, I presume!

Sir Fran. O yes! I would not neglect the house for ever so much.

Man. Well, and pray what have they done there?

Sir Fran. Why, troth, I cann't well tell you what they have done, but I can tell you what I did, and I think pretty well in the main; only I happened to make a little mistake at last, indeed.

Man. How was that?

Sir Fran. Why, they were all got there into a sort of a puzzling debate about the good of the nation—and I were always for that, you know—but, in short, the arguments were so long-winded o' both sides, that, waunds! I did no well understand 'em: Hawsomever, I was convinced, and so resolved to vote right, according to my conscience—so when they came to put the question, as they call it——I don't know how 'twas ——but I doubt I cried Ay! when I should ha' cryed No!

Man. How came that about?

Sir Fran. Why, by a mistake, as I tell you—for there was a good-humoured sort of a gentleman, one Mr Totherside I think they call him, that sat next me, as soon as I had cryed ay, gives me a hearty shake by the hand. Sir, says he, you are a man of honour, and a true Englishman! and I should be proud to be better acquainted with you—and so with that he takes me by the sleeve, along with the crowd, into the lobby—so I knew nowght—but, ods-flesh! I was got o' the wrong side the post—for I were told afterwards, I should have staid where I was.

Man. And so, if you had not quite made your fortune before, you have clenched it now!—Ah! thou head of the Wrongheads. [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Odso! here's my lady come home at last—I hope, cousin, you will be so kind as to take a family supper with us?

Man. Another time, Sir Francis, but to-night I am engaged.

Enter Lady WRONGHEAD, *Miss* JENNY, *and Count* BASSET.

L. Wrong. Cousin, your servant; I hope you will pardon my rudeness; but we have really been in such a continual hurry here, that we have not had a leisure moment to return your kind visit.

Man. O, madam, I am a man of no ceremony; you see that has not hindered my coming again.

L. Wrong. You are infinitely obliging; but I'll redeem my credit with you.

Man. At your own time, madam.

C. Bas. I must say that for Mr Manly, madam—if making people easy is the rule of good breeding, he is certainly the best bred man in the world.

Man Soh! I am not to drop my acquaintance I find—[*Aside.*] I am afraid, sir, I shall grow vain upon your good opinion.

C. Bas. I don't know that, sir; but I am sure what you are pleased to say makes me so.

Man. The most impudent modesty that ever I met with. [*Aside.*

L. Wrong. Lard! how ready his wit is! [*Aside.*

Sir Fran. Don't you think, sir, the count's a very fine gentleman? [*Aside.*

Man. O! among the ladies, certainly. [*Apart.*

Sir Fran. And yet he's as stout as a lion: waund! he'll storm any thing. [*Apart.*

Man. Will he so? Why then, sir, take care of your citadel. [*Apart.*

Sir Fran. Ah! you are a wag, cousin. [*Apart.*

Man. I hope, ladies, the town air continues to agree with you?

Jen. O! perfectly well, sir. We have been abroad in our new coach all day long—and we have bought an ocean of fine things; and tomorrow we go to the masquerade, and on Friday to the play, and on Saturday to the opera, and on Sunday we are to be at the what-d'ye-call-it—assembly, and see the ladies play at quadrille,

and piquet, and ombre, and hazard, and basset; and on Monday we are to see the king; and so on Tuesday——

L. Wrong. Hold, hold, miss! you must not let your tongue run so fast, child——You forget: You know I brought you hither to learn modesty.

Man. Yes, yes; and she is improved with a vengeance. [*Aside.*

Jen. Lawd! mamma, I am sure I did not say any harm; and if one must not speak in one's turn, one may be kept under as long as one lives, for ought I see.

L. Wrong. O' my conscience, this girl grows so headstrong—

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, there's your fine growing spirit for you! Now tack it down, an' you can.

Jen. All I said, papa, was only to entertain my cousin Manly.

Man. My pretty dear, I am mightily obliged to you.

Jen. Look you there now, madam.

L. Wrong. Hold your tongue, I say.

Jen. [*Turning away, and glowting.*] I declare it, I won't bear it: she is always snubbing me before you, sir!—I know why she does it, well enough. [*Aside to the Count.*

C. Bas. Hush! hush, my dear! don't be uneasy at that; she'll suspect us. [*Aside.*

Jen. Let her suspect; what do I care—I don't know but I have as much reason to suspect as she—tho' perhaps I'm not so afraid of her.

C. Bas. [*Aside.*] 'Egad, if I don't keep a tight hand on my tit here, she'll run away with my project before I can brin: it to bear.

L. Wrong. [*Aside.*] Perpetually hanging upon him! The young harlot is certainly in love with him; but I must not let them see I think so—and yet I cann't bear it. Upon my life, count, you'll spoil that forward girl—you should not encourage her so.

C. Bas. Pardon me, madam; I was only advising her to observe what your ladyship said to her.

Man. Yes, truly, her observations have been something particular. [*Aside.*

C. Bas. In one word, madam, she has a jealousy of your ladyship, and I am forc'd to encourage her, to blind it: 'twill be better to take no notice of her behaviour to me. [*Apart.*

L. Wrong. You are right: I will be more cautious. [*Apart.*

C. Bas. To-morrow, at the masquerade, we may lose her. [*Apart.*

L. Wrong. We shall be observ'd. I'll send you a note, and settle that affair——go on with the girl, and don't mind me. [*Apart.*

C. Bas. I have been taking your part, my little angel.

L. Wrong. Jenny, come hither, child——You must not be so hasty, my dear——I only advise you for your good.

Jen. Yes, mamma; but when I am told of a thing before company, it always makes me worse, you know.

Man. If I have any skill in the fair sex, miss and her mamma have only quarrell'd because they are both of a mind. This facetious count seems to have made a very genteel step into the family. [*Aside.*

Enter MYRTILLA—MANLY *talks apart with her.*

L. Wrong. Well, Sir Francis, and what news have you brought us from Westminster to-day?

Sir Fran. News, madam? I'cod! I have some——and such as does not come every day, I can tell you——A word in your ear——I have got a promise of a place at court, of a thousand pawnd a-year already.

L. Wrong. Have you so, sir? And pray who may you thank for't? Now, who's in the right? Is not this better than throwing so much away after a stinking pack of fox-hounds in the country? Now your family may be the better for it.

Sir Fran. Nay, that's what persuaded me to come up, my dove.

L. Wrong. Mighty well!—Come—let me have another hundred pound then.

Sir Fran. Another! Child! Waunds! you have had one hundred this morning; pray what's become of that, my dear?

L. Wrong. What's become of it? Why, I'll shew you, my love! Jenny, have you the bills about you?

Jen. Yes, mamma.

L. Wrong. What's become of it! Why, laid out, my dear, with fifty more to it, that I was forc'd to borrow of the count here.

Jen. Yes, indeed, papa, and that would hardly do neither——There's the account.

Sir Fran. [*Turning over the bills.*] Let's see! let's see! what the devil have we got here?

Man. Then you have sounded your aunt, you say, and she readily comes into all I propos'd to you? [*Apart.*

Myr. Sir, I'll answer with my life she is most thankfully yours in every article: She mightily desires to see you, sir. [*Apart.*

Man. I am going home directly: Bring her to my house in half an hour; and if she makes good what you tell me, you shall both find your account in it. [*Apart.*

Myr. Sir, she shall not fail you. [*Apart.*

Sir Fran. Ods-life! Madam, here's nothing but toys and trinkets, and fans, and clock-stockings by wholesale.

L. Wrong. There's nothing but what's proper, and for your credit, Sir Francis——Nay, you see I am so good a huswife, that in necessaries for myself I have scarce laid out a shilling.

Sir Fran. No, by my troth, so it seems; for the devil o' one thing's here, that I can see you have any occasion for.

L. Wrong. My dear, do you think I came hither to live out of the fashion? Why, the greatest distinction of a fine lady in this town is in the variety of pretty things that she has no occasion for.

Jen. Sure, papa, could you imagine that wo-

men of quality wanted nothing but stays and petticoats?

L. Wrong. Now, that is so like him!

Man. So! the family comes on finely. [*Aside.*

L. Wrong. Lard, if men were always to govern, what dowdies would they reduce their wives to!

Sir Fran. An hundred pound in the morning, and want another afore night! Waunds and fire! The lord mayor of London could not hold it at this rate.

Man. O! do you feel it, sir? [*Aside.*

L. Wrong. My dear, you seem uneasy; let me have the hundred pound, and compose yourself.

Sir Fran. Compose the devil, madam! Why, do you consider what a hundred pound a-day comes to in a year?

L. Wrong. My life! if I account with you from one day to another, that's really all my head is able to bear at a time——But I'll tell you what I consider——I consider that my advice has got you a thousand pound a-year this morning——That, now, methinks, you might consider, sir.

Sir Fran. A thousand a-year! Wounds, madam, but I have not touch'd a penny of it yet!

Man. Nor ever will, I'll answer for him. [*Aside.*

Enter Squire RICHARD.

Sq. Rich. Feyther, an you doan't come quickly, the meat will be coal'd; and I'd fain pick a bit with you.

L. Wrong. Bless me, Sir Francis! you are not going to sup by yourself?

Sir Fran. No, but I'm going to dine by myself, and that's pretty near the matter, madam.

L. Wrong. Had not you as good stay a little, my dear? We shall all eat in half an hour; and I was thinking to ask my cousin Manly to take a family morsel with us.

Sir Fran. Nay, for my cousin's good company, I don't care if I ride a day's journey without baiting.

Man. By no means, Sir Francis. I am going upon a little business.

Sir Fran. Well, sir, I know you don't love compliments.

Man. You'll excuse me, madam.

L. Wrong. Since you have business, sir—— [*Exit* MANLY.

Enter Mrs MOTHERLY.

O, Mrs Motherly, you were saying, this morning, you had some very fine lace to shew me—cann't I see it now? [*Sir* FRANCIS *stares.*

Moth. Why, really, madam, I had made a sort of a promise to let the countess of Nicely have the first sight of it for the birth-day; but your ladyship——

L. Wrong. O! I die if I don't see it before her.

Sq. Rich. Woan't you goa, feyther? [*Apart.*

Sir Fran. Waunds, lad! I shall ha' noa stomach at this rate! [*Apart.*

Moth. Well, madam, though I say it, 'tis the sweetest pattern that ever came over—and for fineness—no cobweb comes up to it!

Sir Fran. Ods guts and gizzard, madam! Lace as fine as a cobweb! Why, what the devil's that to cost now?

Moth. Nay, Sir Francis does not like of it, madam.

L. Wrong. He like it! Dear Mrs Motherly, he is not to wear it.

Sir Fran. Flesh, madam! but I suppose I am to pay for it.

L. Wrong. No doubt on't. Think of your thousand a-year, and who got it you. Go, eat your dinner, and be thankful; go. [*Driving him to the door.*] Come, Mrs Motherly.

[*Exit Lady* WRONGHEAD *with Mrs* MOTHERLY.

Sir Fran. Very fine! So here I mun fast 'till I am almost famished, for the good of my country; while madam is laying me out an hundred pound a-day in lace as fine as a cobweb, for the honour of my family! Ods-flesh! things had need go well at this rate!

Sq. Rich. Nay, nay——come, feyther.

[*Exit with Sir* FRANCIS

Enter Mrs MOTHERLY.

Moth. Madam, my lady desires you and the count will please to come and assist her fancy in some of the new laces.

C. Bas. We'll wait upon her.

[*Exit Mrs* MOTHERLY.

Jen. So! I told you how it was! You see she cann't bear to leave us together.

C. Bas. No matter, my dear: You know she has asked me to stay supper: so when your papa and she are a-bed, Mrs Myrtilla will let me into the house again; then you may steal into her chamber, and we'll have a pretty sneaker or punch together.

Myr. Ay, ay, madam, you may command me any thing.

Jen. Well, that will be pure!

C. Bas. But you had best go to her alone, my life: it will look better if I come after you.

Jen. Ay, so it will. And to-morrow, you know, at the masquerade—and then!—hey! "Oh, I'll have a husband! ay, marry," &c. [*Exit singing.*

Myr. So, sir, am not I very *commode* to you?

C. Bas. Well, child, and don't you find your account in it? Did not I tell you we might still be of use to one another?

Myr. Well, but how stands your affair with miss, in the main?

C. Bas. O, she's mad for the masquerade! It drives like a nail; we want nothing now but a parson, to clinch it. Did not your aunt say she could get one at a short warning?

Myr. Yes, yes, my lord Townly's chaplain is her cousin, you know: he'll do your business and mine at the same time.

C. Bas. O! it's true! but where shall we appoint him?

Myr. Why, you know my lady Townly's

house is always open to the masques upon a ball-night, before they go the Hay-Market.

C. Bas. Good.

Myr. Now the doctor purposes we should all come thither in our habits, and when the rooms are full, we may steal up into his chamber, he says, and there—crack—he'll give us all canonical commission to go to bed together.

C. Bas. Admirable! Well, the devil fetch me, if I shall not be heartily glad to see thee well settled, child.

Myr. And may the black gentleman tuck me under his arm at the same time, if I shall not think myself obliged to you as long as I live.

C. Bas. One kiss for old acquaintance sake—'Egad, I shall want to be busy again.

Myr. O, you'll have one shortly will find you employment;—but I must run to my squire.

C. Bas. And I to the ladies——so your humble servant, sweet Mrs Wronghead.

Myr. Yours, as in duty bound, most noble Count Basset. [*Exit* MYR.

C. Bas. Why, ay, count! That title has been of some use to me indeed; not that I have any more pretence to it than I have to a blue ribband; yet I have made a pretty considerable figure in life with it: I have lolled in my own chariot, dealt at assemblies, dined with ambassadors, and made one at quadrille with the first women of quality—but—*tempora mutantur*——since that damned squadron at White's have left me out of their last secret, I am reduced to trade upon my own stock of industry, and make my last push upon a wife: if my card comes up right, (which I think cann't fail,) I shall once more cut a figure, and cock my hat in the face of the best of them! For since our modern men of fortune are grown wise enough to be sharpers, I think sharpers are fools, that don't take up the airs of men of quality. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Lord* TOWNLY'S *House.*

Enter MANLY *and Lady* GRACE.

Man. There's something, madam, hangs upon your mind to-day: Is it unfit to trust me with it?

L. Grace. Since you will know——my sister then—unhappy woman—

Man. What of her?

L. Grace. I fear is on the brink of ruin!

Man. I am sorry for it.—What has happened?

L. Grace. Nothing so very new; but the continual repetition of it at last has raised my brother to an intemperance that I tremble at.

Man. Have they had any words upon it?

L. Grace. He has not seen her since yesterday.

Man. What! not at home all night!

L. Grace. About five this morning, in she came; but with such looks, and such an equipage of misfortunes at her heels—What can become of her?

Man. Has not my lord seen her, say you?

L. Grace. No; he changed his bed last night—I sat with him alone till twelve, in expectation of her; but when the clock struck, he started from his chair, and grew incensed to that degree, that had I not, almost on my knees, dissuaded him, he had ordered the doors that instant to have been locked against her.

Man. How terrible is his situation? when the most justifiable severities he can use against her are liable to be the mirth of all the dissolute card-tables in town!

L. Grace. 'Tis that, I know, has made him bear so long; but you that feel for him, Mr Manly, will assist him to support his honour, and, if possible, preserve his quiet; therefore I beg you don't leave the house, 'till one or both of them can be wrought to better temper.

Man. How amiable is this concern in you!

L. Grace. For Heaven's sake don't mind me, but think on something to preserve us all.

Man. I shall not take the merit of obeying your commands, madam, to serve my lord—but pray, madam, let me into all that has past since yesternight.

L Grace. When my entreaties had prevailed upon my lord not to make a story for the town, by so public a violence as shutting her at once out of his doors, he ordered the next apartment to my lady's to be made ready for him——While that was doing——I tried, by all the little arts I was mistress of, to amuse him into temper: in short, a silent grief was all I could reduce him to—On this we took our leaves, and parted to our repose: What his was, I imagine by my own; for I ne'er closed my eyes. About five, as I told you, I heard my lady at the door; so I slipt on a gown, and sat almost an hour with her, in her own chamber.

Man. What said she, when she did not find my lord there?

L. Grace. O! so far from being shocked or alarmed at it, that she blessed the occasion, and said, that, in her condition, the chat of a female friend was far preferable to the best husband's company in the world.

Man. Where has she spirits to support so much insensibility?

L. Grace. Nay, 'tis incredible; for though she had lost every shilling she had in the world, and stretched her credit even to breaking, she rallied her own follies with such vivacity, and painted the penance she knows she must undergo for them

in such ridiculous lights, that had not my concern for a brother been too strong for her wit, she had almost disarmed my anger.

Man. Her mind may have another cast by this time The most flagrant dispositions have their hours of anguish, which their pride conceals from company—But pray, madam, how could she avoid coming down to dine?

L. Grace. O! she took care of that before she went to bed, by ordering her woman, whenever she was asked for, to say she was not well.

Man. You have seen her since she was up, I presume?

L. Grace. Up! I question whether she be awake yet.

Man. Terrible! What a figure does she make now! That nature should throw away so much beauty upon a creature, to make such a slatternly use of it!

L. Grace. O fie! there is not a more elegant beauty in town, when she's drest.

Man. In my eye, madam, she that's early drest has ten times her elegance.

L. Grace. But she won't be long now, I believe; for I think I see her chocolate going up.—Mrs Trusty——a-hem!

Mrs TRUSTY *comes to the door.*

Man. [*Aside.*] Five o'clock in the afternoon, for a lady of quality's breakfast, is an elegant hour indeed; which, to shew her more polite way of living too, I presume she eats in her bed.

L. Grace. [*To Mrs* TRUSTY.] And when she is up, I would be glad she would let me come to her toilet——that's all, Mrs Trusty.

Trus. I will be sure to let her ladyship know.

[*Exit Mrs* TRUSTY.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir Francis Wronghead, sir, desires to speak with you.

Man. He comes unseasonably——What shall I do with him?

L. Grace. O, see him by all means: we shall have time enough: in the meanwhile I'll step in and have an eye upon my brother. Nay, don't mind me——you have business.

Man. You must be obeyed——

[*Retreating while Lady* GRACE *goes out.* Desire Sir Francis to walk in——[*Exit Servant.* I suppose by this time his wise worship begins to find that the balance of his journey to London is on the wrong side.

Enter Sir FRANCIS.

Sir Francis, your servant: How came I by the favour of this extraordinary visit?

Sir Fran. Ah, cousin!

Man. Why that sorrowful face, man?

Sir Fran. I have no friend alive but you.

Man. I am sorry for that——but's what's the matter?

Sir Fran. I have played the fool by this journey, I see now—for my bitter wife——

Man. What of her?

Sir Fran. Is playing the devil!

Man. Why, truly, that's a part that most of your fine ladies begin with as soon as they get to London.

Sir Fran. If I am a living man, cousin, she has made away with above two hundred and fifty pounds since yesterday morning!

Man. Hah! I see a good housewife will do a great deal of work in a little time.

Sir Fran. Work, do they call it? Fine work indeed!

Man. Well, but how do you mean made away with it? What, she has laid it out, may be—but I suppose you have an account of it.

Sir Fran. Yes, yes, I have had the account indeed; but I mun needs say it's a very sorry one.

Man. Pray let's hear.

Sir Fran. Why, first I let her have an hundred and fifty, to get things handsome about her, to let the world see that I was somebody; and I thought that sum was very genteel.

Man. Indeed I think so; and in the country might have served her a twelve-month.

Sir Fran. Why, so it might——but here in this fine town, forsooth! it could not get through four-and-twenty hours——for in half that time it was all squandered away in baubles and new-fashioned trumpery.

Man. O! for ladies in London, Sir Francis, all this might be necessary.

Sir Fran. Noa! there's the plague on't! The devil o' one useful thing do I see for it, but two pair of laced shoes, and those stand me in three pound three shillings a pair too.

Man. Dear sir, this is nothing. Why, we have city wives here, that while their good-man is selling three pennyworth of sugar, will give you twenty pound for a short apron.

Sir Fran. Mercy on us! What a mortal poor devil is a husband!

Man. Well, but I hope you have nothing else to complain of?

Sir Fran. Ah! would I could say so too——but there's another hundred behind yet, that goes more to my heart than all that went before it.

Man. And how might that be disposed of?

Sir Fran. Troth, I am almost ashamed to tell you.

Man. Out with it.

Sir Fran. Why, she has been at an assembly.

Man. What, since I saw you! I thought you had all supp'd at home last night.

Sir Fran. Why, so we did——and all as merry as grigs——I'cod! my heart was so open, that I tossed another hundred into her apron, to go out early this morning with——But the cloth was no sooner taken away, than in comes my lady Townly here, (who, between you and I—mum! has had the devil to pay yonder,) with another rantipole dame of quality, and out they must have her, they said, to introduce her at my lady Noble's assembly, forsooth——A few words, you may be sure, made the bargain—so, bawnce! and away they drive, as if the devil had got into the coach-box—So about four or five in the morning——

home comes madam, with her eyes a foot deep in her head, and my poor hundred pound left behind her at the hazard-table.

Man. All lost at dice!

Sir Fran. Every shilling——among a parcel of pig-tail puppies and pale-faced women of quality.

Man. But pray, Sir Francis, how came you, after you found her so ill an housewife of one sum, so soon to trust her with another?

Sir Fran. Why, truly, I mun say that was partly my own fault; for if I had not been a blab of my tongue, I believe that last hundred might have been saved.

Man. How so?

Sir Fran. Why, like an owl as I was, out of good will, forsooth, partly to keep her in humour, I must needs tell her of the thousand pound a-year I had just got the promise of.——I'cod! she lays her claws upon it that moment———said it was all owing to her advice; and, truly, she would have her share on't.

Man. What, before you had it yourself?

Sir Fran. Why, ay, that's what I told her—My dear, said I, mayhap I mayn't receive the first quarter on't this half year.

Man. Sir Francis, I have heard you with a great deal of patience, and I really feel compassion for you.

Sir Fran. Truly, and well you may, cousin; for I don't see that my wife's goodness is a bit the better for bringing to London.

Man. If you remember, I gave you a hint of it.

Sir Fran. Why, ay, it's true you did so; but the devil himself could not have believed she would have rid post to him.

Man. Sir, if you stay but a fortnight in this town, you will every day see hundreds as fast upon the gallop as she is.

Sir Fran. Ah! this London is a base place indeed——Waunds! if things should happen to go wrong with me at Westminster, at this rate, how the devil shall I keep out of a jail?

Man. Why, truly, there seems to me but one way to avoid it.

Sir Fran. Ah! would you could tell me that, cousin.

Man. The way lies plain before you, sir—the same road that brought you hither will carry you safe home again.

Sir Fran. Ods-flesh, cousin! What! and leave a thousand pound a-year behind me?

Man. Pooh! pooh! leave any thing behind you but your family, and you are a saver by it.

Sir Fran Ay, but consider, cousin, what a scurvy figure I shall make in the country, if I come down without it!

Man. You will make a much more lamentable figure in a jail without it.

Sir Fran. Mayhap 'at yow have no great opinion of it then, cousin?

Man. Sir Francis, to do you the service of a real friend, I must speak very plainly to you—You don't yet see half the ruin that's before you!

Sir Fran. Good lack! how may yow mean, cousin?

Man. In one word, your whole affairs stand thus——In a week you'll lose your seat at Westminster: In a fortnight my lady will run you into jail, by keeping the best company: In four-and-twenty hours your daughter will run away with a sharper, because she ha'n't been used to better company; and your son will steal into marriage with a cast-mistress, because he has not been used to any company at all.

Sir Fran. I' th' name o' goodness, why should you think all this?

Man. Because I have proof of it. In short, I know so much of their secrets, that if all this is not prevented to-night, it will be out of your power to do it to-morrow morning.

Sir Fran. Mercy upon us! you frighten me—Well, sir, I will be governed by yow: But what am I to do in this case?

Man. I have not time here to give you proper instructions; but about eight this evening I'll call at your lodgings, and there you shall have full conviction how much I have it at heart to serve you.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lord desires to speak with you.

Man. I'll wait upon him.

Sir Fran. Well then, I'll go straight home now.

Man. At eight depend upon me.

Sir Fran. Ah! dear cousin! I shall be bound to you as long as I live. Mercy deliver us! what a terrible journey have I made on't!

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE II—*Opens to a Dressing-Room.*

Lady TOWNLY, *as just up, walks to her toilet, leaning on Mrs* TRUSTY.

Trus. Dear madam, what should make your ladyship so out of order?

Lady Town. How is it possible to be well, where one is killed for want of sleep?

Trus. Dear me! it was so long before you rung, madam, I was in hopes your ladyship had been finely composed.

Lady Town. Composed! Why, I have lain in an inn here! This house is worse than an inn with ten stage-coaches! What between my lord's impertinent people of business in a morning, and the intolerable thick shoes of footmen at noon, one has not a wink all night.

Trus. Indeed, madam, it's a great pity my lord cann't be persuaded into the hours of people of quality——Though I must say that, madam—your ladyship is certainly the best matrimonial manager in town.

Lady Town. Oh! you are quite mistaken, Trusty. I manage very ill; for notwithstanding all the power I have, by never being over-fond of my lord ——yet I want money infinitely oftener than he is willing to give it me.

Trus. Ah, if his lordship could but be brought to play himself, madam, then he might feel what it is to want money.

Lady Town. Oh! don't talk of it! Do you know that I am undone, Trusty?

Trus. Mercy forbid, madam!

Lady Town. Broke! ruined! plundered!——stripped, even to a confiscation of my last guinea!

Trus. You don't tell me so, madam?

Lady Town. And where to raise ten pound in the world——What is to be done, Trusty?

Trus. Truly, I wish I were wise enough to tell you, madam: But may be your ladyship may have a run of better fortune upon some of the good company that comes here to-night.

Lady Town. But I have not a single guinea to try my fortune!

Trus. Ha! that's a bad business indeed, madam——Adad! I have a thought in my head, madam, if it is not too late.

Lady Town. Out with it quickly then, I beseech thee.

Trus. Has not the steward something of fifty pound, madam, that you left in his hands, to pay somebody about this time?

Lady Town. O ay! I had forgot——'twas to——a——what's his filthy name?

Trus. Now I remember, madam, 'twas to Mr Lutestring, your old mercer, that your ladyship turned off about a year ago, because he would trust you no longer.

Lady Town. The very wretch! If he has not paid it, run quickly, dear Trusty, and bid him bring it hither immediately——[*Exit* TRUSTY.] Well, sure mortal woman never had such fortune! Five! Five and nine against poor seven for ever!——No; after that horrid bar of my chance, that Lady Wronghead's fatal red fist upon the table, I saw it was impossible ever to win another stake.——Sit up all night! lose all one's money! dream of winning thousands! wake without a shilling! and then—— how like a hag I look! In short——the pleasures of life are not worth this disorder! If it were not for shame now, I could almost think Lady Grace's sober scheme not quite so ridiculous——If my wise lord could but hold his tongue for a week, 'tis odds but I should hate the town in a fortnight——But I will not be driven out of it, that's positive! [TRUSTY *returns.*

Trus. O, madam, there is no bearing it! Mr Lutestring was just let in at the door as I came to the stair-foot; and the steward is now actually paying him the money in the hall.

Lady Town. Run to the stair-case head again——and scream to him that I must speak with him this instant. [TRUSTY *runs out, and speaks.*

Trus. Mr Poundage——a-hem! Mr Poundage, a word with you quickly. [*Without.*

Pound. [*Within.*] I'll come to you presently.

Trus. Presently won't do, man; you must come this minute. [*Without.*

Pound. I am but just paying a little money here. [*Without.*

Trus. Gods my life! Paying money? Is the man distracted? Come here, I tell you, to my lady, this moment; quick. [*Without.*] [TRUSTY *returns.*

Lady Town. Will the monster come or no?

Trus. Yes, I hear him now, madam; he is hobbling up as fast as he can.

Lady Town. Don't let him come in—for he will keep such a babbling about his accounts—my brain is not able to bear him.

[POUNDAGE *comes to the door with a money-bag in his hand.*

Trus. O! it's well you are come, sir! Where's the fifty pound?

Pound. Why, here it is; if you had not been in such haste, I should have paid it by this time—the man's now writing a receipt below for it.

Trus. No matter: my lady says you must not pay him with that money; there is not enough, it seems; there's a pistole and a guinea that is not good in it——besides, there is a mistake in the account too—[*Twitching the bag from him*]—but she is not at leisure to examine it now; so you must bid Mr What-d'ye-call-um call another time

Lady Town. What is all that noise there?

Pound. Why, an it please your ladyship——

Lady Town. Pr'ythee, don't plague me now, but do as you were ordered.

Pound. Nay, what your ladyship pleases, madam. [*Exit* POUNDAGE.

Trus. There they are, madam——[*Pours the money out of the bag.*] The pretty things were so near falling into a nasty tradesman's hands, I protest it made me tremble for them——I fancy your ladyship had as good give me that bad guinea for luck's sake—Thank you, madam.

[*Takes a guinea.*

Lady Town. Why, I did not bid you take it.

Trus. No, but your ladyship looked as if you were just going to bid me, and so I was willing to save you the trouble of speaking, madam.

Lady Town. Well, thou hast deserved it, and so, for once——but hark! don't I hear the man making a noise yonder? though I think now we may compound for a little of his ill humour.

Trus. I'll listen.

Lady Town. Pr'ythee do.

[TRUSTY *goes to the door.*

Trus. Ay, they are at it, madam—he's in a bitter passion with poor Poundage——Bless me! I believe he'll beat him——Mercy on us! how the wretch swears!

Lady Town. And a sober citizen too! That's a shame!

Trus. Ha! I think all's silent of a sudden——may be the porter has knocked him down——I'll step and see. [*Exit* TRUSTY.

Lady Town. Those trades-people are the troublesomest creatures! No words will satisfy them.

[TRUSTY *returns.*

Trus. O, madam! undone! undone! My lord has just bolted out upon the man, and is hearing all his pitiful story over—if your ladyship please to come hither, you may hear him yourself.

Lady Town. No matter: It will come round presently: I shall have it from my lord, without losing a word by the way, I'll warrant you.

Trus. O lud! madam! here's my lord just coming in.

Lady Town. Do you get out of the way then. [*Exit* TRUSTY.] I am afraid I want spirits, but he will soon give 'em me.

Enter Lord TOWNLY.

Ld Town. How comes it, madam, that a tradesman dares be clamorous in my house, for money due to him from you?

Lady Town. You don't expect, my lord, that I should answer for other people's impertinence?

Ld Town. I expect, madam, you should answer for your own extravagancies, that are the occasion of it——I thought I had given you money three months ago to satisfy all these sort of people.

Lady Town. Yes, but you see they never are to be satisfied.

Ld Town. Nor am I, madam, longer to be abused thus! What's become of the last five hundred I gave you?

Lady Town. Gone.

Ld Town. Gone! What way, madam?

Lady Town. Half the town over, I believe, by this time.

Ld Town. 'Tis well! I see ruin will make no impression, 'till it falls upon you.

Lady Town. In short, my lord, if money is always the subject of our conversation, I shall make you no answer.

Ld Town. Madam, madam! I will be heard, and make you answer.

Lady Town. Make me! Then I must tell you, my lord, this is a language I have not been used to, and I won't bear it.

Ld Town. Come, come, madam, you shall bear a great deal more, before I part with you.

Lady Town. My lord, if you insult me, you will have as much to bear on your side, I can assure you.

Ld Town. Pooh! Your spirit grows ridiculous—you have neither honour, worth, or innocence, to support it!

Lady Town. You'll find, at least, I have resentment; and do you look well to the provocation!

Ld Town. After those you have given me, madam, 'tis almost infamous to talk with you.

Lady Town. I scorn your imputation and your menaces! The narrowness of your heart's your monitor! 'Tis there! there, my lord, you are wounded. You have less to complain of than many husbands of an equal rank to you.

Ld Town. Death, madam! do you presume upon your corporal merit? that your person's less tainted than your mind? Is it there, there alone an honest husband can be injured? Have you not every other vice that can debase your birth, or stain the heart of woman? Is not your health, your beauty, husband, fortune, family disclaimed, for nights consumed in riot and extravagance? The wanton does no more; if she conceals her shame, does less: And sure the dissolute avowed, as sorely wrongs my honour and my quiet.

Lady Town. I see, my lord, what sort of wife might please you.

Ld Town. Ungrateful woman! could you have seen yourself, you in yourself had seen her—I am amazed our legislature has left no precedent of a divorce for this more visible injury, this adultery of the mind, as well as that of the person! When a woman's whole heart is alienated to pleasures I have no share in, what is't to me whether a black ace or a powdered coxcomb has possession of it?

Lady Town. If you have not found it yet, my lord, this is not the way to get possession of mine, depend upon it.

Ld Town. That, madam, I have long despaired of; and since our happiness cannot be mutual, 'tis fit that with our hearts our persons too should separate——This house you sleep no more in! Though your content might grossly feed upon the dishonour of a husband, yet my desires would starve upon the features of a wife.

Lady Town. Your style, my lord, is much of the same delicacy with your sentiments of honour.

Ld Town. Madam, madam! this is no time for compliments—I have done with you.

Lady Town. If we had never met, my lord, I had not broke my heart for it! But have a care! I may not, perhaps, be so easily recalled as you imagine.

Ld Town. Recalled!—Who's there?

Enter a Servant.

Desire my sister and Mr Manly to walk up.

Lady Town. My lord, you may proceed as you please, but pray what indiscretions have I committed, that are not daily practised by a hundred other women of quality?

Ld Town. 'Tis not the number of ill wives, madam, that makes the patience of a husband less contemptible; and though a bad one may be the best man's lot, yet he'll make a better figure in the world that keeps his misfortunes out of doors, than he that tamely keeps them within.

Lady Town. I don't know what figure you may make, my lord, but I shall have no reason to be ashamed of mine, in whatever company I may meet you.

Ld Town. Be sparing of your spirit, madam; you'll need it to support you.

Enter Lady GRACE *and* MANLY.

Mr Manly, I have an act of friendship to beg of you, which wants more apologies than words can make for it.

Man. Then pray make none, my lord, that I may have the greater merit in obliging you.

Ld Town. Sister, I have the same excuse to entreat of you too.

L. Grace. To your request I beg, my lord.

Ld Town. Thus then—As you both were present at my ill-considered marriage, I now desire you each will be a witness of my determined se-

paration.—I know, sir, your good nature and my sister's must be shocked at the office I impose on you; but as I don't ask your justification of my cause, so I hope you are conscious—that an ill woman cann't reproach you, if you are silent upon her side.

Man. My lord, I never thought, 'till now, it could be difficult to oblige you.

L. Grace. [*Aside.*] Heavens! how I tremble!

Ld Town. For you, my lady Townly, I need not here repeat the provocations of my parting with you—the world, I fear, is too well inform'd of them—For the good lord, your dead father's sake, I will still support you as his daughter—As the lord Townly's wife, you have had every thing a fond husband could bestow, and (to our mutual shame I speak it) more than happy wives desire—But those indulgencies must end! State, equipage, and splendour but ill become the vices that misuse 'em—The decent necessaries of life shall be supplied—but not one article to luxury! Not even the coach that waits to carry you from hence shall you ever use again! Your tender aunt, my lady Lovemore, with tears, this morning, has consented to receive you where, if time and your condition brings you to a due reflection, your allowance shall be increased—But if you still are lavish of your little, or pine for past licentious pleasures, that little shall be less! nor will I call that soul my friend, that names you in my hearing!

L. Grace. My heart bleeds for her. [*Aside.*

Ld Town. O, Manly! look there! turn back thy thoughts with me, and witness to my growing love! There was a time when I believed that form incapable of vice or of decay! There I proposed the partner of an easy home! There I for ever hoped to find a cheerful companion, an agreeable intimate, a faithful friend, a useful help-mate, and a tender mother—But oh! how bitter now the disappointment!

Man. The world is different in its sense of happiness. Offended as you are, I know you will still be just.

Ld Town. Fear me not.

Man. This last reproach, I see, has struck her. [*Aside.*

Ld Town. No, let me not, (though I this moment cast her from my heart for ever,) let me not urge her punishment beyond her crimes—I know the world is fond of any tale that feeds its appetite of scandal; and as I am conscious severities of this kind seldom fail of imputations too gross to mention, I here, before you both, acquit her of the least suspicion raised against the honour of my bed. Therefore, when abroad her conduct may be questioned, do her fame that justice.

Lady Town. O sister!

[*Turns to Lady* GRACE, *weeping.*

Ld Town. When I am spoken of where without favour this action may be canvassed, relate but half my provocations, and give me up to censure. [*Going.*

Lady Town. Support me! save me! hide me from the world! [*Falls on Lady* GRACE's neck.

Ld Town. [*Returning.*]—I had forgot me—You have no share in my resentment; therefore, as you have lived in friendship with her, your parting ma, admit of gentler terms than suit the honour of an injured husband. [*Offers to go out.*

Man. [*Interposing.*] My lord, you must not, shall not leave her thus! One moment's stay can do your cause no wrong. If looks can speak the anguish of the heart, I'll answer with my life there's something labouring in her mind, that, would you bear the hearing, might deserve it.

Ld Town. Consider! Since we no more can meet, press not my staying, to insult her.

Lady Town. Yet stay, my lord—the little I would say will not deserve an insult; and undeserved, I know your nature gives it not. But as you've called in friends to witness your resentment, let them be equal hearers of my last reply.

Ld Town. I sha'n't refuse you that, madam—be it so.

Lady Town. My lord, you ever have complained I wanted love; but as you kindly have allowed I never gave it to another, so when you hear the story of my heart, though you may still complain, you will not wonder at my coldness.

L. Grace. This promises a reverse of temper. [*Apart.*

Man. This, my lord, you are concerned to hear.

Ld Town. Proceed; I am attentive.

Lady Town. Before I was your bride, my lord, the flattering world had talked me into beauty, which, at my glass, my youthful vanity confirmed: Wild with that fame, I thought mankind my slaves; I triumphed over hearts, while all my pleasure was their pain; yet was my own so equally insensible to all, that when a father's firm commands enjoined me to make choice of one, I even there declined the liberty he gave, and to his own election yielded up my youth——His tender care, my lord, directed him to you——Our hands were joined; but still my heart was wedded to its folly! My only joy was power, command, society, profuseness, and to lead in pleasures! The husband's right to rule I thought a vulgar law, which only the deformed or meanly-spirited obeyed. I knew no directors but my passions; no master but my will! Even you, my lord, some time o'ercome by love, was pleased with my delights, nor then foresaw this mad misuse of your indulgence——And though I call myself ungrateful while I own it, yet, as a truth, it cannot be denied—that kind indulgence has undone me! It added strength to my habitual failings; and in a heart thus warm, in wild unthinking life, no wonder if the gentler sense of love was lost.

Ld Town. O, Manly! where has this creature's heart been buried? [*Apart.*

Man. If yet recoverable——how vast a treasure? [*Apart.*

Lady Town. What I have said, my lord, is not my excuse, but my confession! My errors (give 'em, if you please, a harder name) cannot be

defended! No! What's in its nature wrong, no words can palliate, no plea can alter! What then remains in my condition, but resignation to your pleasure? Time only can convince you of my future conduct: Therefore, till I have lived an object of forgiveness, I dare not hope for pardon—The penance of a lonely contrite life were little to the innocent; but to have deserved this separation will strew perpetual thorns upon my pillow.

L. Grace. O happy, heavenly hearing!

Lady Town Sister, farewell! [*Kissing her.*] Your virtue needs no warning from the shame that falls on me; but when you think I have atoned my follies past——persuade your injured brother to forgive them.

Ld Town. No, madam! Your errors, thus renounced, this instant are forgotten! So deep, so due a sense of them has made you what my utmost wishes formed, and all my heart has sighed for.

Lady Town. [*Turning to Lady* GRACE.] How odious does this goodness make me!

L. Grace. How amiable your thinking so!

Ld Town. Long parted friends, that pass through easy voyages of life, receive but common gladness in their meeting; but from a shipwreck saved, we mingle tears with our embraces!

[*Embracing Lady* TOWNLY.

Lady Town. What words, what love, what duty can repay such obligations?

Ld Town. Preserve but this desire to please, your power is endless.

Lady Town. Oh!——'till this moment, never did I know, my lord, I had a heart to give you!

Ld Town. By Heaven! this yielding hand, when first it gave you to my wishes, presented not a treasure more desirable! O Manly! sister! as you have often shared in my disquiet, partake of my felicity—my new-born joy! See here the bride of my desires! This may be called my wedding-day!

L. Grace. Sister, (for now, methinks, that name is dearer to my heart than ever,) let me congratulate the happiness that opens to you.

Man. Long, long and mutual may it flow.

Ld Town. To make our happiness complete, my dear, join here with me to give a hand that amply will repay the obligation.

Lady Town. Sister, a day like this———

L. Grace. Admits of no excuse against the general joy. [*Gives her hand to* MANLY.

Man. A joy like mine—despairs of words to speak it.

Ld Town. O Manly! how the name of friend endears the brother! [*Embracing him.*

Man. Your words, my lord, will warm me to deserve them.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My lord, the apartments are full of masqueraders——And some people of quality there desire to see your lordship and my lady.

Lady Town. I thought, my lord, your orders had forbid this revelling.

Ld Town. No, my dear; Manly has desired their admittance to-night, it seems, upon a particular occasion.——Say we will wait upon them instantly. [*Exit Servant.*

Lady Town. I shall be but ill company to them.

Ld Town. No matter: not to see them would on a sudden be too particular. Lady Grace will assist you to entertain them.

Lady Town. With her, my lord, I shall be always easy.—Sister, to your unerring virtue I now commit the guidance of my future days.

Never the paths of pleasure more to tread,
But where your guarded innocence shall lead;
For in the marriage state the world must own,
Divided happiness was never known:
To make it mutual, Nature points the way:
Let husbands govern; gentle wives obey.

[*Exeunt.*

The SCENE opening to another Apartment, discovers a great number of people in masquerade, talking all together, and playing upon one another—Lady WRONGHEAD *as a shepherdess;* JENNY *as a nun; the Squeeze as a running footman; and the Count in a domino. After sometime, Lord and Lady* TOWNLY, *with Lady* GRACE, *enter to them unmasked.*

Ld Town. So! here's a great deal of company.

L. Grace. A great many people, my lord, but no company—as you'll find——for here's one now that seems to have a mind to entertain us.

[*A Mask, after some affected gesture, makes up to Lady* TOWNLY.

Mask. Well, dear Lady Townly, sha'n't we see you by and by?

Lady Town. I don't know you, madam.

Mask. Don't you, seriously?

[*In a squeaking tone.*

Lady Town. Not I, indeed.

Mask. Well, that's charming; but cann't you guess?

Lady Town. Yes, I could guess wrong, I believe.

Mask. That's what I'd have you do.

Lady Town. But, madam, if I don't know you at all, is not that as well?

Mask. Ay, but you do know me.

Lady Town. Dear sister, take her off my hands; there's no bearing this. [*Apart.*

L. Grace. I fancy I know you, madam.

Mask. I fancy you don't: What makes you think you do?

L. Grace. Because I have heard you talk.

Mask. Ay, but you don't know my voice, I'm sure.

L. Grace. There is something in your wit and humour, madam, so very much your own, it is impossible you can be any body but my lady Trifle

Mask [*Unmasking.*] Dear Lady Grace, thou art a charming creature.

L. Grace. Is there nobody else we know here?

Man. Sir Francis—my lady is ready to receive your commands for her journey, whenever you please to appoint it.

Sir Fran. Ah, cousin! I doubt I am obliged to you for it.

Man. Come, come, Sir Francis, take it as you find it. Obedience in a wife is a good thing, though it were never so wonderful!—And now, sir, we have nothing to do but to dispose of this gentleman.

C. Bas. Mr Manly! Sir, I hope you won't ruin me.

Man. Did not you forge this note for five hundred pounds, sir?

C. Bas. Sir—I see you know the world, and therefore I shall not pretend to prevaricate—— But it has hurt nobody yet, sir. I beg you will not stigmatize me: since you have spoiled my fortune in one family, I hope you won't be so cruel to a young fellow, as to put it out of my power, sir, to make it in another, sir.

Man. Look you, sir, I have not much time to waste with you; but if you expect mercy yourself, you must shew it to one you have been cruel to.

C. Bas. Cruel, sir!

Man. Have you not ruined this young woman?

C. Bas. I, sir!

Man. I know you have; therefore you cann't blame her, if, in the fact you are charged with, she is a principal witness against you. However, you have one, and one only chance to get off with—Marry her this instant—and you take off her evidence.

C. Bas. Dear sir!

Man. No words, sir: A wife or a *mittimus*.

C. Bas. Lord, sir, this is the most unmerciful mercy!

Man. A private penance, or a public one.—— Constable!

C. Bas. Hold, sir. Since you are pleased to give me my choice, I will not make so ill a compliment to the lady, as not to give her the preference.

Man. It must be done this minute, sir: the chaplain you expected is still within call.

C. Bas. Well, sir—since it must be so—— come, spouse—I am not the first of the fraternity that has run his head into one noose, to keep it out of another.

Myr. Come, sir, don't repine: Marriage is, at worst, but playing upon the square.

C. Bas. Ay, but the worst of the match, too, is the devil.

Man. Well, sir, to let you see it is not so bad as you think it, as a reward for her honesty, in detecting your practices, instead of the forged bill you would have put upon her, there's a real one of five hundred pounds, to begin a new honey-moon with. [*Gives it to* MYRTILLA.

C. Bas. Sir, this is so generous an act——

Man. No compliments, dear sir—I am not at leisure now to receive them. Mr Constable, will you be so good as to wait upon this gentleman into the next room, and give this lady in marriage to him?

Con. Sir, I'll do it faithfully.

C. Bas. Well, five hundred will serve to make a handsome push with, however.

[*Exeunt Count.* MYR. *and Constable.*

Sir Fran. And that I may be sure my family's rid of him for ever—come, my lady, let's even take our children along with us, and be all witness of the ceremony.

[*Exeunt Sir* FRAN. *L.* WRONG. *Miss and Squire.*

Man. Now, my lord, you may enter.

Enter Lord and Lady TOWNLY, *and Lady* GRACE.

Ld Town. So, sir, I give you joy of your negociation.

Man. You overheard it all, I presume?

L. Grace. From first to last, sir.

Ld Town. Never were knaves and fools better disposed of.

Man. A sort of poetical justice, my lord, not much above the judgment of a modern comedy.

Ld Town. To heighten that resemblance, I think, sister, there only wants your rewarding the hero of the fable, by naming the day of his happiness.

L. Grace. This day, to-morrow, every hour, I hope, of life to come, will shew I want not inclination to complete it.

Man. Whatever I may want, madam, you will always find endeavours to deserve you.

Ld Town. Then all are happy.

Lady Town. Sister, I give you joy—consummate as the happiest pair can boast.

In you, methinks, as in a glass, I see
The happiness that once advanced to me:
So visible the bliss, so plain the way,
How was it possible my sense could stray?
But now a convert to this truth I come,
That married happiness is never found from home. [*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS OLDFIELD.

METHINKS I hear some powdered critics say,
Damn it! this wife reform'd, has spoil'd the play!
The coxcomb should have drawn her more in fashion;
Have gratified her softer inclination;
Have tipt her a gallant, and clinch'd the provocation.
But there our bard stopt short; for 'twere uncivil
T' have made a modern belle all o'er a devil!
He hop'd, in honour of the sex, the age
Would bear one mended woman—on the stage.
From whence you see by common sense's rules
Wives might be govern'd, were not husbands fools.
Whate'er by Nature dames are prone to do,
They seldom stray but when they govern you;
When the wild wife perceives her deary tame,
No wonder then she plays him all the game.
But men of sense meet rarely that disaster;
Women take pride where merit is their master:
Nay, she that with a weak man wisely lives,
Will seem t'obey the due commands he gives!
Happy obedience is no more a wonder,
When men are men, and keep them kindly under:
But modern consorts are such high-bred creatures,
They think a husband's power degrades their features;
That nothing more proclaims a reigning beauty,
Than that she never was reproached with duty;
And that the greatest blessing Heaven e'er sent,
Is in a spouse incurious and content.
To give such dames a different cast of thought,
By calling home the mind, these scenes were wrought.
If with a hand too rude the task is done,
We hope the scheme by Lady Grace laid down
Will all such freedom with the sex atone;
That virtue there unsoil'd by modish art,
Throws out attractions for a Manly's heart.
You, you, then, ladies, whose unquestioned lives
Give you the foremost fame of happy wives,
Protect, for its attempt, this helpless play,
Nor leave it to the vulgar taste a prey;
Appear the frequent champions of its cause;
Direct the crowd, and give yourselves applause.

SUNG BY MRS CIBBER, IN THE FOURTH ACT.

THE WORDS BY MR CAREY.

Oh, I'll have a husband! ay, marry;
For why should I longer tarry,
For why should I longer tarry
Than other brisk girls have done?
For if I stay till I grow gray,
They'll call me old maid, and fusty old jade;
So I'll no longer tarry,
But I'll have a husband, ay, marry,
If money can buy me one.

My mother she says I'm too coming,
And still in my ears she is drumming,
And still in my ears she is drumming,
That I such vain thoughts shou'd shun.
My sisters they cry, Oh fie! and Oh fie!
But yet I can see, they're as coming as me;
So let me have husbands in plenty;
I'd rather have twenty times twenty,
Than die an old maid undone.

SUNG BY MRS CIBBER, IN THE FIFTH ACT.

THE WORDS BY MR CAREY.

I.

What though they call me country lass—
I read it plainly in my glass,
That for a duchess I might pass:
Oh, could I see the day!
Would Fortune but attend my call,
At park, at play, at ring, at ball,
I'd brave the proudest of them all,
With a *Stand by*——*Clear the way.*

II.

Surrounded by a crowd of beaux,
With smart toupees and powdered clothes,
At rivals I'll turn up my nose:
Oh, could I see the day!
I'll dart such glances from these eyes,
Shall make some lord or duke my prize,
And then, oh! how I'll tyrannize,
With a *Stand by*——*Clear the way.*

III.

Oh! then for every new delight,
For equipage and diamonds bright,
Quadrille, and plays, and balls at night:
Oh, could I see the day!
Of love and joy I'd take my fill,
The tedious hours of life to kill;
In every thing I'd have my will,
With a *Stand by*——*Clear the way.*

THE

SPANISH FRIAR.

BY

DRYDEN.

PROLOGUE.

Now luck for us, and a kind hearty pit;
For he who pleases never fails of wit.
Honour is yours,
And you, like kings at city treats, bestow it;
The writer kneels, and is bid rise a poet:
But you are fickle sovereigns, to our sorrow;
You dub to-day, and hang a man to-morrow;
You cry the same sense up and down again,
Just like brass money once a-year in Spain:
Take you i' the mood, whate'er base metal come,
You coin as fast as groats at Birmingham;
Though 'tis no more like sense in ancient plays,
Than Rome's religion's like St Peter's days:
In short, so swift your judgments turn and wind,
You cast our fleetest wits a mile behind.
'Twere well your judgments but in plays did range,
But even your follies and debauches change
With such a whirl, the poets of your age
Are tired, and cannot score them on the stage,
Unless each vice in short-hand they indite,
Even as notch'd 'prentices whole sermons write.
The heavy Hollanders no vices know,
But what they us'd a hundred years ago;
Like honest plants, where they were stuck they grow.
They cheat, but still from cheating sires they come;
They drink, but they were christ'ned first in mum.
Their patrimonial sloth the Spaniards keep,
And Philip first taught Philip how to sleep.
The French and we still change, but here's the curse,
They change for better, and we change for worse;
They take up our old trade of conquering,
And we are taking theirs, to dance and sing.
Our fathers did, for change, to France repair,
And they, for change, will try our English air.
As children, when they throw one toy away,
Strait a more foolish gewgaw comes in play;
So we, grown penitent, on serious thinking,
Leave whoring, and devoutly fall to drinking.
Scowring the watch grows out-of-fashion wit:
Now we set up for tilting in the pit,
Where 'tis agreed by bullies, chicken-hearted,
To fright the ladies first, and then be parted.
A fair attempt has twice or thrice been made
To hire night-murderers, and make death a trade.
When murder's out, what vice can we advance?
Unless the new-found pois'ning trick of France:
And when their art of rats-bane we have got,
By way of thanks, we'll send them o'er our Plot.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

TORRISMOND, *supposed Son to* RAYMOND.
BERTRAN, *a Prince of the Blood.*
ALPHONSO, *Brother to* RAYMOND.
LORENZO, *his Son.*
RAYMOND, *supposed Father of* TORRISMOND.
PEDRO, *an Officer.*
GOMEZ, *an old Usurer.*
DOMINICK, *the Spanish Friar.*

WOMEN.

LEONORA, *Queen of Arragon.*
TERESA, *Woman to* LEONORA.
ELVIRA, *Wife to* GOMEZ.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

ALPHONSO *and* PEDRO *meet, with Soldiers on each side, Drums, &c.*

Alph. Stand! give the word.
Ped. The queen of Arragon.
Alph. Pedro?——how goes the night?
Ped. She wears apace.
Alph. Then welcome day-light. We shall have warm work on't:
The Moor will 'gage
His utmost forces on this next assault,
To win a queen and kingdom.
Ped. Pox o' this lion way of wooing though!
Is the queen stirring yet?
Alph. She has not been a-bed, but in her chapel
All night devoutly watch'd, and brib'd the saints
With vows for her deliverance.
Ped. Oh, Alphonso,
I fear they come too late: her father's crimes
Sit heavy on her, and weigh down her prayers.
A crown usurp'd, a lawful king depos'd,
In bondage held, debarr'd the common light;
His children murdered, and his friends destroyed,
What can we less expect than what we feel?
And what we fear will follow.
Alph. Heaven avert it.
Ped. Then Heaven must not be Heaven. Judge the event
By what has pass'd. The usurper joy'd not long
His ill-got crown. 'Tis true, he died in peace,
(Unriddle that, ye powers,) but left his daughter,
Our present queen, engaged, upon his death-bed,
To marry with young Bertran, whose cursed father
Had helped to make him great.
Hence you well know this fatal war arose,
Because the Moor Abdallah, with whose troops
The usurper gained the kingdom, was refused,
And, as an infidel, his love despised.
Alph. Well, we are soldiers, Pedro, and, like lawyers,
Plead for our pay.
Ped. A good cause would do well though;
It gives my sword an edge. You see this Bertran
Has now three times been beaten by the Moors;
What hope we have is in young Torrismond,
Your brother's son.
Alph. He's a successful warrior,
And has the soldier's hearts. Upon the skirts
Of Arragon our squadron'd troops he rallies:
Our watchmen from the towers with longing eyes
Expect his swift arrival.
Ped. It must be swift, or it will come too late.
Alph. No more——Duke Bertran.

Enter BERTRAN, *attended.*

Bert. Relieve the centries that have watched all night. [*To* PED.
Now, colonel, have you disposed your men,
That you stand idle here?
Ped. Mine are drawn off,
To take a short repose.
Bert. Short let it be;
For from the Moorish camp, this hour and more,
There has been heard a distant humming noise,
Like bees disturbed, and arming in their hives.
What courage in our soldiers? Speak! What hope?
Ped. As much as when physicians shake their heads,
And bid their dying patient think of Heaven.
Our walls are thinly manned; our best men slain;
The rest, an heartless number, spent with watching,
And harassed out with duty.
Bert. Good night all then.
Ped. Nay, for my part, 'tis but a single life
I have to lose: I'll plant my colours down
In the mid-breach, and by them fix my foot;
Say a short soldier's prayer, to spare the trouble
Of my few friends above, and then expect
The next fair bullet.
Alph. Never was known a night of such distraction;
Noise so confused and dreadful; jostling crowds
That run, and know not whither; torches gliding
Like meteors, by each other in the streets.
Ped. I met a reverend, fat, old gouty friar,—
With a paunch swoll'n so high, his double chin
Might rest upon't; a true son of the church;
Fresh colour'd, and well thriven on his trade,—
Came puffing with his greasy bald-pate choir,
And fumbling o'er his beads, in such an agony,
He told them false for fear: about his neck
There hung a wench, the label of his function,
Whom he shook off, i'faith, methought, unkindly.
It seems the holy stallion durst not score
Another sin before he left the world.

Enter a Captain.

Capt. To arms, my lord, to arms!
From the Moors' camp the noise grows louder still;
Rattling of armour, trumpets, drums, and atabales,
And sometimes peals of shouts, that rend the Heavens
Like victory; the groans again, and howlings,
Like those of vanquish'd men; but every echo
Goes fainter off, and dies in distant sounds.
Bert. Some false attack: expect, on the other side.

One to the gunners on St Jago's tower: bid them, for shame,
Level their cannon lower: on my soul,
They're all corrupted with the gold of Barbary,
To carry over, and not hurt the Moor.

Enter a Second Captain.

2 *Capt.* My lord, here's fresh intelligence arrived.
Our army, led by valiant Torrismond,
Is now in hot engagement with the Moors;
'Tis said, within their trenches.
Bert. I think all fortune is reserved for him.
He might have sent us word though,
And then we could have favoured his attempt
With sallies from the town.
Alph. It could not be:
We were so close block'd up, that none could peep
Upon the walls and live; but yet 'tis time.
Bert. No, 'tis too late; I will not hazard it:
On pain of death, let no man dare to sally.
Ped. [*Aside.*] Oh, envy, envy, how it works within him!
How now! what means this show?
Alph. 'Tis a procession:
The queen is going to the great cathedral,
To pray for our success against the Moors.
Ped. Very good: she usurps the throne, keeps the old king in prison, and, at the same time, is praying for a blessing: Oh, religion and roguery, how they go together!
[*Shout and flourish of trumpets.*

A Procession of Priests and Choristers in white, with tapers, followed by the Queen and Ladies, goes over the stage; the Choristers singing.

Look down, ye bless'd above, look down;
Behold our weeping matrons tears,
Behold our tender virgins fears,
And with success our armies crown.

Look down, ye bless'd above, look down;
Oh, save us, save us, and our state restore;
For pity, pity, pity we implore;
For pity, pity, pity we implore.
[*The Procession goes off, and shout within.*

Enter LORENZO, *who kneels to* ALPHONSO.

Bert. [*To* ALPH.] A joyful cry; and see your son, Lorenzo. Good news, kind Heav'n!
Alph. [*To* LOR.] Oh, welcome, welcome! Is the general safe?
How near our army? When shall we be succour'd?
Or are we succour'd? Are the Moors removed?
Answer these questions first, and then a thousand more;
Answer them all together.
Lor. Yes, when I have a thousand tongues, I will.
The general's well; his army too is safe
As victory can make them: the Moors' king
Is safe enough, I warrant him, for one:
At dawn of day our general cleft his pate,
Spite of his woollen night-cap: a slight wound;
Perhaps he may recover.
Alph. Thou revivest me.
Ped. By my computation now, the victory was gained before the procession was made for it, and yet it will go hard but the priests will make a miracle of it.
Lor. Yes, faith, we came, like bold intruding guests,
And took them unprepared to give us welcome.
Their scouts we killed, then found their body sleeping,
And as they lay confused, we stumbled o'er them,
And took what joint came next—arms, heads, or legs,
Somewhat undecently. But when men want light,
They make but bungling work.
Bert. I'll to the queen,
And bear the news.
Ped. That's young Lorenzo's duty.
Bert. I'll spare his trouble.——
This Torrismond begins to grow too fast;
He must be mine, or ruined. [*Aside.*
Lor. Pedro, a word. [*Whisper.*]
[*Exit* BERTRAN.
Alph. How swift he shot away! I find it stung him,
In spite of his dissembling.
[*To* LOR.] How many of the enemy are slain?
Lor. Troth, sir, we were in haste, and could not stay
To score the men we killed; but there they lie:
Best send our women out to take the tale;
There's circumcision in abundance for them.
[*Turns to* PEDRO *again.*
Alph. How far did you pursue them?
Lor. Some few miles.
[*To* PED.] Good store of harlots, say you, and dog-cheap?
Pedro, they must be had, and speedily:
I've kept a tedious fast. [*Whispers again.*
Alph. When will he make his entry? He deserves
Such triumphs as were given by ancient Rome.
Ha, boy, what sayest thou?
Lor. As you say, sir, that Rome was very ancient.—
[*To* PED.] I leave the choice to you; fair, black, tall, low;
Let her but have a nose. And you may tell her I'm rich in jewels, rings, and bobbing pearls,
Plucked from Moors' ears.
Alph. Lorenzo.
Lor. Somewhat busy
About affairs relating to the public.——
A seasonable girl, just in the nick now. [*To* PED.
[*Trumpets within.*
Ped. I hear the general's trumpet. Stand and mark
How he will be received: I fear but coldly:
There hung a cloud, methought, on Bertran's brow.

Lor. Then look to see a storm on Torrismond's.
Looks fright not men: the general has seen Moors
With as bad faces, no dispraise to Bertran's.
Ped. 'Twas rumour'd in the camp he loves the queen.
Lor. He drinks her health devoutly.
Alph. That may breed bad blood 'twixt him and Bertran.
Ped. Yes, in private.
But Bertran has been taught the arts of courts,
To gild a face with smiles, and leer a man to ruin.
Oh, here they come.—

Enter TORRISMOND *and Officers on one side,* BERTRAN, *attended, on the other; they embrace,* BERTRAN *bowing low.*

Just as I prophesied.
Lor. Death and hell! he laughs at him! in's face too.
Ped. Oh, you mistake him! 'twas an humble grin,
The fawning joy of courtiers and of dogs.
Lor [*Aside.*] Here are nothing but lies to be expected. I'll e'en go lose myself in some blind alley, and try if any courteous damsel will think me worth the finding. [*Exit* LOR.
Alph. Now he begins to open.
Bert. Your country rescu'd, and your queen reliev'd!
A glorious conquest, noble Torrismond!
The people rend the skies with loud applause,
And Heav'n can hear no other name but yours.
The thronging crowds press on you as you pass,
And with their eager joy make triumph slow.
Tor. My lord, I have no taste
Of popular applause; the noisy praise
Of giddy crowds, as changeable as winds,
Still vehement, and still without a cause;
Servants to chance, and blowing in the tide
Of swoll'n success; but veering with its ebb,
It leaves the channel dry.
Bert. So young a stoic!
Tor. You wrong me, if you think I'll sell one drop
Within these veins for pageants; but let honour
Call for my blood, and sluice it into streams:
Turn Fortune loose again to my pursuit,
And let me hunt her through embattled foes,
In dusty plains, amidst the cannon's roar,
There will I be the first.
Bert. I'll try him farther.—— [*Aside.*
Suppose the assembled states of Arragon
Decree a statue to you, thus inscribed—
To Torrismond, who freed his native land.
Alph. [*To* PED.] Mark how he sounds and fathoms him, to find
The shallows of his soul.
Bert. The just applause
Of godlike senates is the stamp of virtue,
Which makes it pass unquestioned through the world.
These honours you deserve; nor shall my suffrage
Be last to fix them on you: If refused,
You brand us all with black ingratitude;
For times to come shall say, our Spain, like Rome,
Neglects her champions after noble acts,
And lets their laurels wither on their heads.
Tor. A statue for a battle blindly fought,
Where darkness and surprise made conquest cheap!
Where Virtue borrowed but the arms of Chance,
And struck a random blow! 'Twas Fortune's work,
And Fortune take the praise.
Bert. Yet happiness
Is the first fame. Virtue without success
Is a fair picture shewn by an ill light;
But lucky men are favourites of Heaven;
And whom should kings esteem above Heaven's darlings?
The praises of a young and beauteous queen
Shall crown your glorious acts.
Ped. [*To* ALPH.] There sprung the mine.
Tor. The queen! that were a happiness too great!
Named you the queen, my lord?
Bert. Yes. You have seen her, and you must confess,
A praise, a smile, a look from her is worth
The shouts of thousand amphitheatres.
She, she shall praise you; for I can oblige her:
To-morrow will deliver all her charms
Into my arms, and make her mine for ever.
Why stand you mute?
Tor. Alas, I cannot speak!
Bert. Not speak, my lord! How were your thoughts employed?
Tor. Nor can I think; for I am lost in thought.
Bert. Thought of the queen, perhaps?
Tor. Why, if it were,
Heaven may be thought on, though too high to climb.
Bert. Oh, now I find where your ambition drives!
You ought not to think of her.
Tor. So I say too;
I ought not: madmen ought not to be mad,
But who can help his frenzy?
Bert. Fond young man!
The wings of your ambition must be clipped.
Your shame-faced virtue shunned the people's praise,
And senate's honours; but 'tis well we know
What price you hold yourself at. You have fought
With some success, and that has sealed your pardon.
Tor. Pardon from thee! Oh, give me patience, Heaven!
Thrice vanquished Bertran, if thou darest, look out
Upon yon slaughtered host, that field of blood;
There seal my pardon, where thy fame was lost.
Ped. He's ruined, past redemption!
Alph. [*To* TOR.] Learn respect
To the first prince o' the blood.
Bert. Oh, let him rave;

I'll not contend with madmen.

Tor. I've done.
I know 'twere madness to declare this truth,
And yet 'twere baseness to deny my love.
'Tis true, my hopes are vanishing as clouds,
Lighter than children's bubbles blown by wind;
My merit's but the rash result of chance;
My birth unequal; all the stars against me;
Power, promise, choice, the living and the dead;
Mankind my foes, and only love my friend;
But such a love, kept at such awful distance,
As, what it loudly dares to tell, a rival
Shall fear to whisper there. Queens may be loved,
And so may gods; else why are altars raised?
Why shines the sun, but that he may be viewed?
But oh, when he's too bright, if then we gaze,
'Tis but to weep, and close our eyes in darkness!
[*Exit.*

Bert. 'Tis well: the goddess shall be told, she shall,
Of her new worshipper. [*Exit.*

Ped. So, here's fine work!
He supplied his only foe with arms
For his destruction. Old Penelope's tale
Inverted: he has unravelled all by day,
That he has done by night. What, planet-struck!

Alph. I wish I were, to be past sense of this.

Ped. Would I had but a lease of life so long,
As till my flesh and blood rebelled this way
Against our sovereign lady! Mad for a queen,
With a globe in one hand, and a sceptre in t'other;
A very pretty moppet!

Alph. Then to declare his madness to his rival,
His father absent on an embassy,
Himself a stranger, almost wholly friendless!
A torrent, rolling down a precipice,
Is easier to be stopped than is his ruin.

Ped. 'Tis fruitless to complain: Haste to the court;
Improve your interest there, for pardon from the queen.

Alph. Weak remedies;
But all must be attempted. [*Exit.*

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Well, I am the most unlucky rogue! I have been ranging over half the town, but have sprung no game. Our women are worse infidels than the Moors: I told them I was one of their knights-errant, that delivered them from ravishment; and I think in my conscience that's their quarrel to me.

Ped. Is this a time for fooling? Your cousin is run honourably mad in love with her majesty: he is split upon a rock; and you, who are in chace of harlots, are sinking in the main ocean. I think the devil's in the family. [*Exit.*

Lor. My cousin ruined, says he?—Hum!—Not that I wish my cousin's ruin; that were unchristian; but if the general's ruined, I am heir; there's comfort for a Christian. Money I have, I thank the honest Moors for't; but I want a mistress. I am willing to be lewd, but the emptier is wanting on his part.

Enter ELVIRA, *veiled.*

Elv. Stranger! cavalier!—Will you not hear me, you Moor-killer, you *matador*?

Lor. Meaning me, madam?

Elv. Face about, man: you a soldier, and afraid of the enemy!

Lor. I must confess, I did not expect to have been charged first. I see souls will not be lost for want of diligence in this devil's reign. [*Aside.*]—Now, madam Cynthia behind a cloud, your will and pleasure with me?

Elv. You have the appearance of a cavalier; and if you are as deserving as you seem, perhaps you may not repent of your adventure. If a lady like you well enough to hold discourse with you at first sight, you are gentleman enough, I hope, to help her out with an apology, and to lay the blame on stars, or destiny, or what you please, to excuse the frailty of a woman.

Lor. Oh, I love an easy woman! there's such ado to crack a thick-shelled mistress, we break our teeth, and find no kernel. 'Tis generous in you to take pity on a stranger, and not to suffer him to fall into ill hands at his first arrival.

Elv. You have a better opinion of me than I deserve. You have not seen me yet, and therefore I am confident you are heart-whole.

Lor. Not absolutely slain, I must confess, but I am drawing on apace. You have a dangerous tongue in your head, I can tell you that; and if your eyes prove of as killing metal, there's but one way with me. Let me see you, for the safeguard of my honour: 'tis but decent the cannon should be drawn down upon me before I yield.

Elv. What a terrible similitude have you made, colonel, to shew that you are inclining to the wars! I could answer you with another in my profession. Suppose you were in want of money—would you not be glad to take a sum upon content in a sealed bag, without peeping?—But however I will not stand with you for a sample. [*Lifts up her veil.*

Lor. What eyes were there! how keen their glances! you do well to keep them veiled: they are too sharp to be trusted out of the scabbard.

Elv. Perhaps, now, you may accuse my forwardness; but this day of jubilee is the only time of freedom I have had; and there is nothing so extravagant as a prisoner, when he gets loose a little, and is immediately to return to his fetters.

Lor. To confess freely to you, madam—I was never in love with less than your whole sex before; but now I have seen you, I am in the direct road of languishing and sighing; and if love goes on as it begins, for aught I know, by tomorrow morning you may hear of me in rhyme and sonnet. I tell you truly, I do not like these symptoms in myself. Perhaps I may go shufflingly at first; for I was never before walked in trammels; yet I shall drudge and moil at constancy, till I have worn off the hitching in my pace.

Elv. Oh, sir, there are arts to reclaim the wildest men, as there are to make spaniels fetch and carry—chide them often, and feed them seldom. Now I know your temper, you may thank yourself if you are kept to hard meat—you are in for years, if you make love to me.

Lor. I hate a formal obligation, with an *anno Domini* at the end on't: there may be an evil meaning in the word years, called matrimony.

Elv. I can easily rid you of that fear; I wish I could rid myself as easily of the bondage.

Lor. Then you are married?

Elv. If a covetous, and a jealous, and an old man be a husband.

Lor. Three as good qualities for my purpose as I could wish. Now, Love be praised!

Enter ELVIRA'S *Duenna, and whispers to her.*

Elv. [*Aside.*] If I get not home before my husband, I shall be ruined—[*To him.*] I dare not stay to tell you where—Farewell—Could I once more—— [*Exit.*

Lor. This is unconscionable dealing; to be made a slave, and not know whose livery I wear. —Who have we yonder?

Enter GOMEZ.

By that shambling in his walk, it should be my rich old banker Gomez, whom I knew at Barcelona. As I live, 'tis he! [*To* GOMEZ.] What, old Mammon, here!

Gom. How! young Belzebub?

Lor. What devil has set his claws in thy haunches, and brought thee hither to Saragossa? Sure he meant a farther journey with thee.

Gom. I always remove before the enemy: when the Moors are ready to besiege one town, I shift my quarters to the next: I keep as far from the infidels as I can.

Lor. That's but a hair's-breadth at farthest.

Gom. Well, you have got a famous victory; all true subjects are overjoyed at it; there are bonfires decreed: an' the times had not been so hard, my billet should have been burnt too.

Lor. I dare say for thee, thou hast such a respect for a single billet, that thou wouldst almost have thrown on thyself to save it: thou art for saving every thing but thy soul.

Gom. Well, well, you'll not believe me generous till I carry you to the tavern, and crack half a pint with you at my own charge.

Lor. No; I'll keep thee from hanging thyself for such an extravagance; and, instead of it, thou shalt do me a mere verbal courtesy. I have just now seen a most incomparable young lady.

Gom. Whereabouts did you see this most incomparable young lady?—My mind misgives me plaguily. [*Aside.*

Lor. Here, man; just before this corner house: pray Heaven it prove no bawdy-house.

Gom. [*Aside.*] Pray Heaven he does not make it one!

Lor. What dost thou mutter to thyself? Hast thou any thing to say against the honesty of that house?

Gom. Not I, colonel: the walls are very honest stone, and the timber very honest wood, for aught I know; but for the woman I cannot say, till I know her better. Describe her person, and if she live in this quarter, I may give you tidings of her.

Lor. She's of a middle stature, dark-coloured hair, the most bewitching leer with her eyes, the most roguish cast; her cheeks are dimpled when she smiles, and her smiles would tempt an heretic.

Gom. [*Aside.*] I am dead, I am buried, I am damned!—Go on—colonel—Have you no other marks of her?

Lor. Thou hast all her marks, but that she has a husband, a jealous, covetous old hunks. Speak; canst thou tell me news of her?

Gom. Yes, this news, colonel, that you have seen your last of her.

Lor. If thou helpest me not to the knowledge of her, thou art a circumcised Jew.

Gom. Circumcise me no more than I circumcise you, Colonel Hernando. Once more, you have seen your last of her.

Lor. [*Aside.*] I am glad he knows me only by that name of Hernando, by which I went at Barcelona; now he can tell no tales of me to my father. [*To him.*] Come, thou wert ever good-natured, when thou couldst get by it. Look here, rogue; 'tis of the right damning colour: thou art not proof against gold, sure! Do not I know thee for a covetous——

Gom. Jealous old hunks: Those were the marks of your mistress's husband, as I remember, colonel.

Lor. O, the devil! What a rogue in understanding was I, not to find him out sooner! [*Aside.*

Gom. Do, do, look sillily, good colonel; 'tis a decent melancholy after an absolute defeat.

Lor. Faith, not for that, dear Gomez—but—

Gom. But—no pumping, my dear colonel.

Lor. Hang pumping. I was—thinking a little upon a point of gratitude. We two have been long acquaintance: I know thy merits, and can make some interest. Go to! Thou wert born to authority: I'll make thee alcaide—mayor of Saragossa.

Gom. Satisfy yourself: you shall not make me what you think, colonel.

Lor. Faith but I will: thou hast the face of a magistrate already.

Gom. And you would provide me with a magistrate's head to my magistrate's face. I thank you, colonel.

Lor. Come, thou art so suspicious upon an idle story.—That woman I saw, I mean that little, crooked, ugly woman, for t'other was a lie—is no more thy wife—as I'll go home with thee, and satisfy thee immediately, my dear friend.

Gom. I shall not put you to that trouble; no, not so much as a single visit; not so much as an embassy by a civil old woman, nor a serenade of twincledum twincledum under my windows: nay, I will advise you, out of tenderness to your person, that you walk not near yon corner house by night; for, to my certain knowledge, there are

blunderbusses planted in every loop-hole, that go off constantly of their own accord, at the squeaking of a fiddle, and the thrumming of a guitar.

Lor. Art thou so obstinate? Then I denounce open war against thee: I'll demolish thy citadel by force; or, at least, I'll bring my whole regiment upon thee; my thousand red locusts, that shall devour thee in free quarter.——Farewell, Wrought Night-Cap. [*Exit.*

Gom. Farewell, Buff! Free quarter for a regiment of red-coat locusts! I hope to see them all in the Red Sea first. But oh, this Jezebel of mine! I'll get a physician that shall prescribe her an ounce of camphire every morning for her breakfast, to abate incontinency. She shall never peep abroad, no, not to church for confesion; and for never going, she shall be condemned for a heretic. She shall have stripes by troy weight, and sustenance by drachms and scruples; nay, I'll have a fasting almanack printed on purpose for her use, in which

No carnival nor Christmas shall appear,
But Lents and Ember-weeks shall fill the year.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Queen's Antichamber.*

ALPHONSO *and* PEDRO.

Alph. When saw you my Lorenzo?
Ped. I had a glimpse of him; but he shot by me
Like a young hound upon a burning scent:
He's gone a harlot-hunting.
Alph. His foreign breeding might have taught him better.
Ped. 'Tis that has taught him this.
What learn our youth abroad, but to refine
The homely vices of their native land?
Give me an honest homespun country clown
Of our own growth; his dulness is but plain,
But theirs embroidered; they are sent out fools,
And come back fops.
Alph. You know what reasons urged me;
But now I have accomplished my designs,
I should be glad he knew them. His wild riots
Disturb my soul; but they would sit more close,
Did not the threatened downfal of our house,
In Torrismond, o'erwhelm my private ills.

Enter BERTRAN, *attended, and whispering with a Courtier aside.*

Bert. I would not have her think he dared to love her;
If he presumes to own it, she's so proud,
He tempts his certain ruin.
Alph. [*To* PED.] Mark how disdainfully he throws his eyes on us:
Our old imprisoned king wore no such looks.
Ped. O, would the general shake off his dotage to the usurping queen,
And re-enthrone good venerable Sancho!
I'll undertake, should Bertran sound his trumpets,
And Torrismond but whistle through his fingers,
He draws his army off.
Alph. I told him so,
But had an answer louder than a storm.
Ped. Now plague and pox on his smock-loyalty!
I hate to see a brave bold fellow sotted,
Made sour and senseless, turned to whey, by love;
A drivelling hero, fit for a romance.
O, here he comes; what will their greeting be?

Enter TORRISMOND, *attended.* BERTRAN *and he meet, and jostle.*

Bert. Make way, my lords, and let the pageant pass.
Tor. I make my way where'er I see my foe,
But you, my lord, are good at a retreat.
I have no Moors behind me.
Bert. Death and hell!
Dare to speak thus when you come out again.
Tor. Dare to provoke me thus, insulting man.

Enter TERESA.

Ter. My lords, you are too loud so near the queen;
You, Torrismond, have much offended her.
'Tis her command you instantly appear,
To answer your demeanour to the prince.
[*Exit* TERESA, BERTRAN *with his company following her.*
Tor. O, Pedro! O, Alphonso! pity me!
A grove of pikes,
Whose polished steel from far severely shines,
Are not so dreadful as this beauteous queen.
Alph. Call up your courage timely to your aid,
And, like a lion pressed upon the toils,
Leap on your hunters. Speak your actions boldly.
There is a time when modest virtue is
Allowed to praise itself.
Ped. Heart, you were hot enough, too hot, but now;
Your fury then boiled upward to a foam;
But since this message came, you sink and settle,
As if cold water had been poured upon you.
Tor. Alas, thou knowest not what it is to love!
When we behold an angel, not to fear,
Is to be impudent. No, I'm resolved,
Like a led victim, to my death I'll go,
And, dying, bless the hand that gave the blow.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Draws, and shews the Queen sitting in state;* BERTRAN *standing next her; then* TERESA, *&c. She rises, and comes to the front.*

Qu. [*To* BERT.] I blame not you, my lord: my father's will,

Your own deserts, and all my people's voice,
Have placed you in the view of sovereign power:
But I would learn the cause why Torrismond,
Within my palace walls, within my hearing,
Almost within my sight, affronts a prince
Who shortly shall command him.

Bert. He thinks you owe him more than you can pay,
And looks as he were lord of human kind.

Enter TORRISMOND, ALPHONSO, *and* PEDRO. TORRISMOND *bows low, then looks earnestly on the Queen, and keeps at a distance.*

Ter. Madam, the general.

Qu. Let me view him well.
My father sent him early to the frontiers,
I have not often seen him; if I did,
He passed unmarked by my unheeding eyes.
But where's the fierceness, the disdainful pride,
The haughty port, the fiery arrogance?
By all these marks, this is not sure the man.

Bert. Yet this is he who filled your court with tumult;
Whose fierce demeanour, and whose insolence,
The patience of a god could not support.

Qu. Name his offence, my lord, and he shall have
Immediate punishment.

Bert. 'Tis of so high a nature, should I speak it,
That my presumption then would equal his.

Qu. Some one among you speak.

Ped. [*Aside.*] Now my tongue itches.

Qu. All dumb! On your allegiance, Torrismond,
By all your hopes, I do command you, speak.

Tor. [*Kneeling.*] O seek not to convince me of a crime
Which I can ne'er repent, nor can you pardon;
Or, if you needs will know it, think, oh think,
That he who thus commanded dares to speak,
Unless commanded, would have died in silence.
But you adjured me, madam, by my hopes!
Hopes I have none, for I am all despair;
Friends I have none, for friendship follows favour;
Desert I have none, for what I did was duty;
Oh, that it were! that it were duty all!

Qu. Why do you pause? Proceed.

Tor. As one condemned to leap a precipice,
Who sees before his eyes the depth below,
Stops short, and looks about for some kind shrub
To break his dreadful fall——so I——
But whither am I going? If to death,
He looks so lovely sweet in beauty's pomp,
He draws me to his dart.—I dare no more.

Bert. He's mad beyond the cure of hellebore.
Whips, darkness, dungeons for this insolence.

Tor. Mad as I am, yet I know when to bear.

Qu. You're both too bold. You, Torrismond, withdraw;
I'll teach you all what's owing to your queen.
For you, my lord——
The priest to-morrow was to join our hands;
I'll try if I can live a day without you.
So both of you depart, and live in peace.

Alph. Who knows which way she points?
Doubling and turning like an hunted hare,
Find out the meaning of her mind who can.

Ped. Who ever found a woman's? Backward and forward. The whole sex in every word. In my conscience, when she was getting, her mother was thinking of a riddle.

[*Exeunt all but the Queen and* TERESA.

Qu. Haste, my Teresa, haste, and call him back.

Ter. Whom, madam?

Qu. Him.

Ter. Prince Bertran?

Qu. Torrismond:
There is no other he.

Ter. [*Aside.*] A rising sun,
Or I am much deceived. [*Exit* TERESA.

Qu. A change so swift what heart did ever feel!
It rushed upon me like a mighty stream,
And bore me in a moment far from shore.
I've loved away myself; in one short hour
Already am I gone an age of passion.
Was it his youth, his valour, or success?
These might perhaps be found in other men.
'Twas that respect, that awful homage paid me;
That fearful love which trembled in his eyes,
And with a silent earthquake shook his soul.
But when he spoke, what tender words he said!
So softly, that, like flakes of feathered snow,
They melted as they fell.

Enter TERESA *with* TORRISMOND.

Ter. He waits your pleasure.

Qu. 'Tis well. Retire.—Oh, Heavens, that I must speak
So distant from my heart. [*Aside.*
[*To* TOR.] How now! What boldness brings you back again?

Tor. I heard 'twas your command.

Qu. A fond mistake,
To credit so unlikely a command.
And you return full of the same presumption,
To affront me with your love?

Tor. If 'tis presumption for a wretch condemned,
To throw himself beneath his judge's feet,
A boldness more than this I never knew,
Or, if I did, 'twas only to your foes.

Qu. You would insinuate your past services,
And those, I grant, were great; but you confess
A fault committed since, that cancels all.

Tor. And who could dare to disavow his crime,
When that for which he is accused and seized,
He bears about him still? My eyes confess it;
My every action speaks my heart aloud:
But oh, the madness of my high attempt
Speaks louder yet; and all together cry,
I love, and I despair.

Qu. Have you not heard,
My father with his dying voice bequeathed
My crown and me to Bertran? And dare you,
A private man, presume to love a queen?

Tor. That, that's the wound! I see you set so high,

As no desert or services can reach.
Good Heavens, why gave you me a monarch's soul,
And crusted it with base plebeian clay?
Why gave you me desires of such extent,
And such a span to grasp them? Sure my lot
By some o'er-hasty angel was misplaced
In Fate's eternal volume!—But I rave,
And like a giddy bird in dead of night,
Fly round the fire that scorches me to death.

Qu. Yet, Torrismond, you've not so ill deserved,
But I may give you counsel for your cure.

Tor. I cannot, nay, I wish not to be cured.

Qu. [*Aside.*] Nor I, Heaven knows!

Tor. There is a pleasure, sure,
In being mad, which none but madmen know!
Let me indulge it; let me gaze for ever!
And since you are too great to be beloved,
Be greater, greater yet, and be adored.

Qu. These are the words which I must only hear
From Bertran's mouth; they should displease from you;
I say they should; but women are so vain
To like the love, though they despise the lover.
Yet, that I may not send you from my sight
In absolute despair—I pity you.

Tor. Am I then pitied? I have lived enough!
Death take me in this moment of my joy:
But when my soul is plunged in long oblivion,
Spare this one thought—let me remember pity,
And so deceived, think all my life was blessed.

Qu. What if I add a little to my alms?
If that would help, I could cast in a tear
To your misfortunes.

Tor. A tear! You have o'erbid all my past sufferings,
And all my future too.

Qu. Were I no queen,
Or you of royal blood——

Tor. What have I lost by my forefathers' fault!
Why was not I the twentieth by descent
From a long restive race of droning kings?
Love, what a poor omnipotence hast thou,
When gold and titles buy thee?

Qu. [*Sighs.*] Oh, my torture!

Tor. Might I presume, but oh, I dare not hope
That sigh was added to your alms for me.

Qu. I give you leave to guess, and not forbid you
To make the best construction for your love.
Be secret and discreet; these fairy favours
Are lost when not concealed.—Provoke not Bertran.—
Retire.—I must no more but this—Hope, Torrismond. [*Exit.*

Tor. She bids me hope! Oh, Heavens, she pities me!
And pity still foreruns approaching love,
As lightning does the thunder! Tune your harps,
Ye angels, to that sound; and thou, my heart,
Make room to entertain thy flowing joy.
Hence all my griefs and every anxious care—
One word and one kind glance can cure despair. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Chamber. A table and wine set out.*

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. This may hit; 'tis more than barely possible; for friars have free admittance into every house. This jacobin whom I have sent to is her confessor; and who can suspect a man of such reverence for a pimp? I'll try for once; I'll bribe him high; for commonly none love money better than they who have made a vow of poverty.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There's a huge, fat, religious gentleman coming up, sir: he says he's but a friar, but he's big enough to be a pope: his gills are as rosy as a turkey-cock's: his great belly walks in state before him, like an harbinger, and his gouty legs come limping after it: never was such a tun of devotion seen.

Lor. Bring him in, and vanish. [*Exit Serv.*

Enter Father DOMINICK.

Lor. Welcome, father.

Dom. Peace be here: I thought I had been sent for to a dying man, to have fitted him for another world.

Lor. No, faith, father, I was never for taking such long journeys. Repose yourself, I beseech you, sir, if those spindle legs of yours will carry you to the next chair.

Dom. I am old, I am infirm, I must confess, with fasting.

Lor. 'Tis a sign by your wan complexion and your thin jowls, father. Come, to our better acquaintance: Here's a sovereign remedy for old age and sorrow. [*Drinks.*

Dom. The looks of it are indeed alluring: I'll do you reason. [*Drinks.*

Lor. Is it to your palate, father?

Dom. Second thoughts, they say, are best: I'll consider of it once again. [*Drinks.*] It has a most delicious flavour with it. Gad forgive me! I have forgotten to drink your health, son: I am not used to be so unmannerly. [*Drinks again.*

Lor. No, I'll be sworn, by what I see of you, you are not. To the bottom, I warrant him, a true church-man. Now, father, to our business; 'tis agreeable to your calling: I intend to do an act of charity.

Dom. And I love to hear of charity; 'tis a comfortable subject.

Lor. Being, in the late battle, in great hazard of my life, I recommended my person to good St Dominick.

Dom. You could not have pitched upon a better: he's a sure card: I never knew him fail his votaries.

Lor. Troth, I e'en made bold to strike up a bargain with him, that if I escaped with life and plunder, I would present some brother of his

order with part of the booty taken from the infidels, to be employed in charitable uses.

Dom. There you hit him: St Dominick loves charity exceedingly; that argument never fails with him.

Lor. The spoils were mighty; and I scorn to wrong him of a farthing. To make short my story—I inquired among the jacobins for an almoner, and the general has pointed out your reverence as the worthiest man. Here are fifty pieces in this purse.

Dom. How! Fifty pieces? 'Tis too much, too much in conscience.

Lor. Here, take them, father.

Dom. No, in troth, I dare not; do not tempt me to break my vow of poverty.

Lor. If you are modest, I must force you; for I am strongest.

Dom. Nay, if you compel me, there's no contending; but will you set your strength against a decrepid, poor old man? [*Takes the purse.*] As I said, 'tis too great a bounty; but St Dominick shall owe you another 'scape; I'll put him in mind of you.

Lor. If you please, father, we will not trouble him till the next battle. But you may do me a greater kindness, by conveying my prayers to a female saint.

Dom. A female saint! Good now, good now; how your devotions jump with mine! I always loved the female saints.

Lor. I mean a female, mortal, married-woman saint. Look upon the superscription of this note. You know Don Gomez's wife?

[*Gives him a letter.*

Dom. Who? Donna Elvira? I think I have some reason: I am her ghostly father.

Lor. I have some business of importance with her, which I have communicated in this paper; but her husband is so horribly given to be jealous——

Dom. Ho, jealous! He's the very quintessence of jealousy: he keeps no male creature in his house, and from abroad he lets no man come near her.

Lor. Excepting you, father.

Dom. Me, I grant you: I am her director and her guide in spiritual affairs. But he has his humours with me too; for t'other day he called me false apostle.

Lor. Did he so? That reflects upon you all; on my word, father, that touches your copyhold. If you would do a meritorious action, you might revenge the church's quarrel. My letter, father.

Dom. Well, so far as a letter, I will take upon me; for what can I refuse to a man so charitably given?

Lor. If you bring an answer back, that purse in your hand has a twin-brother, as like him as ever he can look: there are fifty pieces lie dormant in it, for more charities.

Dom. That must not be; not a farthing more, upon my priesthood. But what may be the purport and meaning of this letter? that, I confess, a little troubles me.

Lor. No harm, I warrant you.

Dom. Well, you are a charitable man, and I'll take your word: my comfort is, I know not the contents, and so far I am blameless. But an answer you shall have, though not for the sake of your fifty pieces more; I have sworn not to take them; they shall not be altogether fifty. Your mistress—forgive me that I should call her your mistress, I meant Elvira, lives but at next door: I'll visit her immediately; but not a word more of the nine-and-forty pieces.

Lor. Nay, I'll wait on you down stairs.—Fifty pounds for the postage of a letter, to send by the church, is certainly the dearest road in Christendom. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

Enter GOMEZ *and* ELVIRA.

Gom. Henceforth I banish flesh and wine: I'll have none stirring within these walls these twelve months.

Elv. I care not; the sooner I am starved, the sooner I am rid of wedlock. I shall learn the knack to fast a days; you have used me to fasting nights already.

Gom. How the gipsey answers me! Oh, 'tis a most notorious hilding.

Elv. [*Crying.*] But was ever poor innocent creature so hardly dealt with, for a little harmless chat?

Gom. Oh, the impudence of this wicked sex! Lascivious dialogues are innocent chat with you.

Elv. Was it such a crime to inquire how the battle passed?

Gom. But that was not the business, gentlewoman: you were not asking news of a battle past; you were engaging for a skirmish that was to come.

Elv. An honest woman would be glad to hear that her honour was safe, and her enemies were slain.

Gom. [*In her tone.*] And to ask if he were wounded in your defence; and, in case he were, to offer yourself to be his surgeon. Then you did not describe your husband to him, for a covetous, jealous, rich old hunks.

Elv. No, I need not; he describes himself sufficiently; but in what dream did I do this?

Gom. You walked in your sleep, with your eyes broad open at noon-day, and dreamed you were talking to the aforesaid purpose with one Colonel Hernando.

Elv. Who, dear husband, who?

Gom. What the devil have I said? You would have farther information, would you?

Elv. No; but my dear, little old man, tell me now, that I may avoid him for your sake.

Gom. Get you up into your chamber, cockatrice, and there immure yourself: be confined, I say, during our royal pleasure; but first down on your marrow-bones, upon your allegiance, and make an acknowledgment of your offences; for I will have ample satisfaction.

[*Pulls her down.*

Elv. I have done you no injury, and therefore

I'll make you no submission; but I'll complain to my ghostly father.

Gom. Ay, there's your remedy: when you receive condign punishment, you run with open mouth to your confessor, that parcel of holy guts and garbage; he must chuckle you and moan you; but I'll rid my hands of his ghostly authority one day,

Enter DOMINICK.

and make him know he's the son of a——[*Sees him.*] So—no sooner conjure, but the devil's in the circle.

Dom. Son of what, Don Gomez?

Gom. Why, a son of a church; I hope there's no harm in that, father?

Dom. I will lay up your words for you till time shall serve; and to-morrow I enjoin you to fast, for penance.

Gom. [*Aside.*] There's no harm in that: she shall fast too: fasting saves money.

Dom [*To* ELV.] What was the reason that I found you upon your knees, in that unseemly posture?

Gom. [*Aside.*] Oh, horrible! To find a woman upon her knees, he says, is an unseemly posture: there's a priest for you.

Elv. [*To* DOM.] I wish, father, you would give me an opportunity of entertaining you in private; I have somewhat upon my spirits that presses me exceedingly.

Dom. [*Aside.*] This goes well. Gomez, stand you at a distance—farther yet—stand out of earshot—I have somewhat to say to your wife in private.

Gom. [*Aside.*] Was ever man thus priest-ridden? Would the steeple of his church were in his belly; I am sure there's room for it.

Elv. I am ashamed to acknowledge my infirmities; but you have been always an indulgent father, and therefore I will venture to—and yet I dare not.

Dom. Nay, if you are bashful—if you keepyour wound from the knowledge of your surgeon——

Elv. You know my husband is a man in years; but he's my husband, and therefore I shall be silent, but his humours are more intolerable than his age: he's grown so froward, so covetous, and so jealous, that he has turned my heart quite from him, and, if I durst confess it, has forced me to cast my affections on another man.

Dom. Good!—Hold, hold; I meant abominable.—Pray Heaven this be my colonel. [*Aside.*

Elv. I have seen this man, father, and have encouraged his addresses: he's a young gentleman, a soldier, of a most winning carriage; and what his courtship may produce at last I know not, but I am afraid of my own frailty.

Dom. [*Aside.*] 'Tis he, for certain: she has saved the credit of my function, by speaking first: now I must take gravity upon me.

Gom. [*Aside.*] This whispering bodes me no good, for certain; but he has me so plaguily under the lash, that I dare not interrupt him.

Dom. Daughter, daughter, do you remember your matrimonial vow?

Elv. Yes, to my sorrow, father, I do remember it: a miserable woman it has made me: but you know, father, a marriage vow is but a thing of course, which all women take when they would get a husband.

Dom. A vow is a very solemn thing, and it is good to keep it—but, notwithstanding, it may be broken upon some occasions. Have you striven with all your might against this frailty?

Elv. Yes, I have striven; but I found it was against the stream. Love, you know, father, is a great vow-maker, but he's a great vow-breaker.

Dom. 'Tis your duty to strive always; but, notwithstanding, when we have done our utmost, it extenuates the sin.

Gom. I can hold no longer.—Now, gentlewoman, you are confessing your enormities; I know it, by that hypocritical, down-cast look. Enjoin her to sit bare upon a bed of nettles, father; you can do no less in conscience.

Dom. Hold your peace: are you growing malapert? Will you force me to make use of my authority? Your wife's a well-disposed and a virtuous lady; I say it, *in verbo sacerdotis.*

Elv. I know not what to do, father: I find myself in a most desperate condition; and so is the colonel, for love of me.

Dom. The colonel, say you? I wish it be not the same young gentleman I know: 'Tis a gallant young man, I must confess, worthy of any lady's love in Christendom; in a lawful way, I mean: of such a charming behaviour, so bewitching to a woman's eye, and, furthermore, so charitably given; by all good tokens, this must be my Colonel Hernando.

Elv. Ay, and my colonel too, father. I am overjoyed. And are you then acquainted with him?

Dom. Acquainted with him! Why, he haunts me up and down; and I am afraid it is for love of you; for he pressed a letter upon me, within this hour, to deliver to you: I confess I received it, lest he should send it by some other, but with full resolution never to put it into your hands.

Elv. Oh, dear father, let me have it, or I shall die.

Gom. Whispering still! A pox of your close committee! I'll listen; I'm resolved.

[*Steals nearer.*

Dom. Nay, if you are obstinately bent to see it, use your discretion; but for my part, I wash my hands on't.—What makes you listening there? Get farther off: I preach not to thee, thou wicked eaves-dropper.

Elv. I'll kneel down, father, as if I were taking absolution, if you'll but please to stand before me.

Dom. At your peril be it then. I have told you the ill consequences, *et liberavi animam meam.*—Your reputation is in danger, to say

nothing of your soul. Notwithstanding, when the spiritual means have been applied, and fail, in that case the carnal may be used.—You are a tender child, you are, and must not be put into despair: your heart is as soft and melting as your hand. [*He strokes her face, takes her by the hand, and gives the letter.*

Gom. Hold, hold, father; you go beyond your commission; palming is always held foul play amongst gamesters.

Dom. Thus good intentions are misconstrued by wicked men. You will never be warned till you are excommunicated.

Gom. [*Aside.*] Ah, devil on him! there's his hold! If there were no more in excommunication than the church's censure, a wise man would lick his conscience whole with a wet finger; but if I am excommunicated, I am outlawed, and then there's no calling in my money.

Elv. [*Rising.*] I have read the note, father, and will send him an answer immediately; for I know his lodging by his letter.

Dom. I understand it not, for my part; but I wish your intentions be honest. Remember that adultery, though it be a silent sin, yet it is a crying sin also. Nevertheless, if you believe absolutely he will die, unless you pity him, to save a man's life is a point of charity; and actions of charity do alleviate, as I may say, and take off from the mortality of the sin. Farewell, daughter.—Gomez, cherish your virtuous wife, and thereupon I give you my benediction. [*Going.*

Gom. Stay; I'll conduct you to the door, that I may be sure you steal nothing by the way. Friars wear not their long sleeves for nothing.—Oh, it is a Judas Iscariot. [*Exit after the Friar.*

Elv. This friar is a comfortable man! He will understand nothing of the business, and yet does it all.

Pray, wives and virgins, at your time of need,
For a true guide, of my good father's breed.
[*Exit.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street.*

Enter LORENZO *in a Friar's habit, following* DOMINICK.

Lor. Father Dominick, Father Dominick! Why in such haste, man?

Dom. It should seem a brother of our order.

Lor. No, faith; I am only your brother in iniquity; my holiness, like yours, is mere outside.

Dom. What! my noble colonel in metamorphosis! On what occasion are you transformed?

Lor. Love, almighty love, that which turned Jupiter into a town bull, has transformed me into a friar. I have had a letter from Elvira, in answer to that I sent by you.

Dom. You see I have delivered my message faithfully: I am a friar of honour where I am engaged.

Lor. Oh I understand your hint: The other fifty pieces are ready to be condemned to charity.

Dom. But this habit, son, this habit!

Lor. 'Tis a habit that in all ages has been friendly to fornication: you have begun the design in this clothing, and I'll try to accomplish it. The husband is absent; that evil counsellor is removed; and the sovereign is graciously disposed to hear my grievances.

Dom. Go to: go to. I find good counsel is but thrown away upon you. Fare you well, fare you well, son. Ah!

Lor. How! will you turn recreant at the last cast? You must along, to countenance my undertaking: We are at the door, man.

Dom. Well, I have thought on't, and I will not go.

Lor. You may stay, father; but no fifty pounds without it: that was only promised in the bond: but the condition of this obligation is such, that if the above-named father, Father Dominick, do not well and faithfully perform—

Dom. Now I better think on't, I will bear you company; for the reverence of my presence may be a curb to your exorbitancies.

Lor. Lead up your myrmidon, and enter.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter ELVIRA *in her chamber.*

Elv. He'll come, that's certain: young appetites are sharp, and seldom need twice bidding to such a banquet. Well, if I prove frail, as I hope I shall not, till I have compassed my design, never woman had such a husband to provoke her, such a lover to allure her, or such a confessor to absolve her! Of what am I afraid, then? Not my conscience; that's safe enough; my ghostly father has given it a dose of church opium, to lull it. Well, for soothing sin, I'll say that for him, he's a chaplain for any court in Christendom.

Enter LORENZO *and* DOMINICK.

Oh, Father Dominick, what news? How! a companion with you! What game have you in hand, that you hunt in couples?

Lor. [*Lifting up his hood.*] I'll shew you that immediately.

Elv. Oh, my love!

Lor. My life!

Elv. My soul [*They embrace.*

Dom. I am taken on the sudden with a grievous swimming in my head, and such a mist before my eyes, that I can neither hear nor see.

Elv. Stay, and I'll fetch you some comfortable water.

Dom. No, no; nothing but the open air will do me good. I'll take a turn in your garden; but remember that I trust you both, and do not wrong my good opinion of you. [*Exit.*

Elv. This is certainly the dust of gold which you have thrown in the good man's eyes, that on the sudden he cannot see; for my mind misgives me, this sickness of his is but apocryphal.

Lor. 'Tis no qualm of conscience, I'll be sworn. You see, madam, 'tis interest governs all the world. He preaches against sin. Why? Because so much more is bidden for his silence.

Elv. And so much for the friar.

Lor. Oh, those eyes of yours reproach me justly, that I neglect the subject which brought me hither.

Elv. Do you consider the hazard I have run to see you here? If you do, methinks it should inform you that I love not at a common rate.

Lor. Nay, if you talk of considering, let us consider why we are alone. Do you think the friar left us together to tell beads? Love is a kind of penurious god, very niggardly of his opportunities: he must be watched, like a hard-hearted treasurer; for he bolts out on the sudden, and if you take him not in the nick, he vanishes in a twinkling.

Elv. Why do you make such haste to have done loving me? You men are like watches, wound up for striking twelve immediately; but after you are satisfied, the very next that follows is the solitary sound of single one.

Lor. How, madam! Do you invite me to a feast, and then preach abstinence?

Elv. No, I invite you to a feast where the dishes are served up in order. You are for making a hasty meal, and for chopping up your entertainment like a hungry clown. Trust my management, good colonel, and call not for your desert too soon. Believe me, that which comes last, as it is the sweetest, so it cloys the soonest.

Lor. I perceive, madam, by your holding me at this distance, that there is somewhat you expect from me. What am I to undertake or suffer ere I can be happy?

Elv. I must first be satisfied that you love me.

Lor. By all that's holy, by these dear eyes——

Elv. Spare your oaths and protestations: I know you gallants of the time have a mint at your tongue's end, to coin them.

Lor. You know you cannot marry me; but, by Heavens, if you were in a condition——

Elv. Then you would not be so prodigal of your promises, but have the fear of matrimony before your eyes. In few words, if you love me, as you profess, deliver me from this bondage, take me out of Egypt, and I'll wander with you as far as earth, and seas, and love can carry us.

Lor. I never was out at a mad frolic, though this is the maddest I ever undertook. Have with you, lady mine; I take you at your word; and if you are for a merry jaunt, I'll try, for once, who can foot it farthest. There are hedges in summer, and barns in winter, to be found: I with my knapsack, and you with your bottle at your back. We'll leave honour to madmen, and riches to knaves, and travel till we come to the ridge of the world, and then drop together into the next.

Elv. Give me your hand, and strike a bargain.

[*He takes her hand, and kisses it.*

Lor. In sign and token whereof, the parties interchangeably, and so forth——When should I be weary of sealing upon this soft wax?

Elv. Oh Heavens, I hear my husband's voice!

Enter GOMEZ.

Gom. Where are you, gentlewoman? There's something in the wind, I'm sure, because your woman would have run up stairs before me; but I have secured her below, with a gag in her chops ——Now, in the devil's name, what makes this friar here again? I do not like these frequent conjunctions of the flesh and the spirit: They are boding.

Elv. Go hence, good father: my husband, you see, is in an ill humour, and I would not have you witness of his folly.

[LORENZO *going.*

Gom. [*Running to the door.*] By your reverence's favour, hold a little; I must examine you something better before you go. Hey-day! who have we here? Father Dominick is shrunk in the wetting two yards and a half about the belly. What are become of those two timber-logs that he used to wear for legs, that stood strutting like the two black posts before a door? I am afraid some bad body has been setting him over a fire in a great cauldron, and boiled him down half the quantity for a receipt. This is no Father Dominick, no huge over-grown abbey-lubber; this is but a diminutive sucking friar. As sure as a gun, now, Father Dominick has been spawning this young slender antichrist.

Elv. [*Aside.*] He will be found out; there's no prevention!

Gom. Why does he not speak? What, is the friar possessed with a dumb devil? If he be, I shall make bold to conjure him.

Elv. He is but a novice in his order, and is enjoined silence for a penance.

Gom. A novice, quoth-a! You would make a novice of me too, if you could. But what is his business here? Answer me that, gentlewoman; answer me that.

Elv. What should it be, but to give me some spiritual instructions?

Gom. Very good! and you are like to edify much from a dumb preacher. This will not pass; I must examine the contents of him a little closer. Oh, thou confessor, confess who thou art, or thou art no friar of this world!

[*He comes to* LORENZO, *who struggles with him; his habit flies open, and discovers a sword;* GOM. *starts back.*

As I live, this is a manifest member of the church militant!

Lor. [*Aside.*] I am discovered—Now, impudence be my refuge.—Yes, faith, 'tis I, honest Gomez.—Thou seest I use thee like a friend. This is a familiar visit.

Gom. What, Colonel Hernando turned friar! Who could have suspected you of so much godliness?

Lor. E'en as thou seest, I make bold here.

Gom. A very frank manner of proceeding! But I do not wonder at your visit, after so friendly an invitation as I made you. Marry, I hope you'll excuse the blunderbusses, for not being in readiness to salute you; but let me know your hour, and all shall be mended another time.

Lor. Hang it, I hate such ripping up old unkindness. I was upon the frolic this evening, and came to visit thee in masquerade.

Gom. Very likely; and not finding me at home, you were forced to toy away an hour with my wife, or so.

Lor. Right: thou speakest my very soul.

Gom. Why, am I not a friend then, to help you out? You would have been fumbling half an hour for this excuse. But, as I remember, you promised to storm my citadel, and bring your regiment of red locusts upon me for free quarter. I find, colonel, by your habit, there are black locusts in the world, as well as red.

Elv. [*Aside.*] When comes my share of the reckoning to be called for?

Lor. Give me thy hand: thou art the honestest kind man—I was resolved I would not go out of the house till I had seen thee.

Gom. No, in my conscience, if I had staid abroad till midnight. But, colonel, you and I shall talk in another tone hereafter; I mean, in cold friendship, at a bar before a judge, by way of plaintiff and defendant. Your excuses want some grains to make them current: hum and haw will not do the business. There's a modest lady of your acquaintance: she has so much grace to make none at all, but silently to confess the power of dame Nature working in her body to youthful appetite.

Elv. How he got in I know not, unless it were by virtue of his habit.

Gom. Ay, ay, the virtues of that habit are known abundantly.

Elv. I could not hinder his entrance; for he took me unprovided——

Gom. To resist him!

Elv. I'm sure he has not been here above a quarter of an hour.

Gom. And a quarter of that time would have served thy turn. Oh, thou epitome of thy virtuous sex! Madam Messalina the second, retire to thy apartment; I have an assignation there to make with thee.

Elv. I'm all obedience. [*Exit.*

Lor. I find, Gomez, you are not the man I thought you. We may meet before we come to the bar, we may; and our differences may be decided by other weapons than by lawyers' tongues. In the mean time, no ill treatment of your wife, as you hope to die a natural death, and go to hell in your bed. Bilbo is the word; remember that, and tremble. [*He is going out.*

Enter DOMINICK.

Dom. Where is this naughty couple? Where are you, in the name of goodness? My mind misgave me, and I durst trust you no longer by yourselves. Here will be fine work, I'm afraid, at your next confession!

Lor. [*Aside.*] The devil is punctual, I see: he has paid me the shame he owed me, and now the friar is coming in for his part too.

Dom. [*Seeing* GOM.] Bless my eyes! what do I see?

Gom. Why, you see a cuckold of this honest gentleman's making; I thank him for his pains.

Dom. I confess I am astonished!

Gom. What, at a cuckoldom of your own contrivance! Your head-piece and his limbs have done my business—Nay, do not look so strangely: remember your own words—Here will be fine work at your next confession! What naughty couple were they, whom you durst not trust together any longer, when the hypocritical rogue had trusted them a full quarter of an hour? And by the way, horns will sprout in less time than mushrooms.

Dom. Beware how you accuse one of my order upon light suspicions. The naughty couple that I meant were your wife and you, whom I left together with great animosities on both sides. Now that was the occasion, mark me, Gomez, that I thought it convenient to return again, and not to trust your enraged spirits too long together. You might have broken out into revilings and matrimonial warfare, which are sins; and new sins make work for new confessions.

Lor. [*Aside.*] Well said, i'faith, friar: thou art come off thyself, but poor I am left in limbo.

Gom. Angle in some other ford, good father: you shall catch no gudgeons here. Look upon the prisoner at the bar, friar, and inform the court what you know concerning him: he is arraigned here by the name of Colonel Hernando.

Dom. What colonel do you mean, Gomez? I see no man but a reverend brother of our order, whose profession I honour, but whose person I know not, as I hope for paradise.

Gom. No, you are not acquainted with him: the more's the pity: You do not know him, under this disguise, for the greatest cuckold-maker in all Spain?

Dom. Oh, impudence! Oh, rogue! Oh, villain!—Nay, if he be such a man, my righteous spirit rises at him! Does he put on holy garments for a cover-shame of lewdness?

Gom. Yes, and he's in the right on't, father: when a swinging sin is to be committed, nothing will cover it so close as a friar's hood; for there the devil plays at bo-peep, puts out his horns to do a mischief, and then shrinks them back for safety, like a snail into her shell.

Lor. [*Aside.*] It's best marching off while I can

retreat with honour. There's no trusting this friar's conscience; he has renounced me already more heartily than he e'er did the devil, and is in a fair way of prosecuting me for putting on these holy robes. This is the old church trick; the clergy is ever at the bottom of the plot; but they are wise enough to slip their own necks out of the collar, and leave the laity to be fairly hanged for it. [*Exit* LOR.

Gom. Follow your leader, friar; your colonel is trooped off; but he had not gone so easily, if I durst have trusted you in the house behind him. Gather up your gouty legs, I say, and rid my house of that huge body of divinity.

Dom. I expect some judgment should fall upon you, for your want of reverence to your spiritual director. Slander, covetousness, and jealousy will weigh thee down.

Gom. Put pride, hypocrisy, and gluttony into your scale, father, and you shall weigh against me: nay, if sins come to be divided once, the clergy puts in for nine parts, and scarce leaves the laity a tithe.

Dom. How darest thou reproach the tribe of Levi?

Gom. Marry, because you make us laymen of the tribe of Issachar. You make asses of us, to bear your burdens. When we are young, you put panniers upon us with your church-discipline; and when we are grown up, you load us with a wife: after that, you procure for other men, and then you load our wives too. A fine phrase you have amongst you to draw us into marriage: you call it settling of a man; just as when a fellow has got a sound knock upon the head, you say he is settled—marriage is a settling blow indeed. They say every thing in the world is good for something, as a toad, to suck up the venom of the earth; but I never knew what a friar was good for, till your pimping shewed me.

Dom. Thou shalt answer for this, thou slanderer! Thy offences be upon thy head.

Gom. I believe there are some offences there of your planting. [*Exit* DOM.]—Lord, Lord, that men should have sense enough to set snares in their warrens to catch pole-cats and foxes! And yet———

Want wit a priest-trap at their door to lay,
For holy vermin that in houses prey. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*A Palace.*

Queen and TERESA.

Ter. You are not what you were since yesterday;
Your food forsakes you, and your needful rest;
You pine, you languish, love to be alone;
Think much, speak little, and, in speaking, sigh.
When you see Torrismond, you are unquiet;
But when you see him not, you are in pain.

Qu. Oh, let them never love, who never tried!
They brought a paper to me to be sign'd;
Thinking on him, I quite forgot my name,
And writ, for Leonora, Torrismond.
I went to bed, and to myself I thought
That I would think on Torrismond no more;
Then shut my eyes, but could not shut out him.
I turned, and tried each corner of my bed,
To find if sleep were there, but sleep was lost.
Fev'rish, for want of rest, I rose, and walked,
And, by the moonshine, to the windows went;
There thinking to exclude him from my thoughts.
I cast my eyes upon the neighbouring fields,
And, ere I was aware, sighed to myself,
There fought my Torrismond.

Ter. What hinders you to take the man you love?
The people will be glad, the soldiers shout,
And Bertran, though repining, will be awed.

Qu. I fear to try new love;
As boys to venture on the unknown ice,
That crackles underneath them while they slide.
Oh, how shall I describe this growing ill!
Betwixt my doubt and love, methinks I stand
Falt'ring, like one that waits an ague-fit;
And yet, would this were all!

Ter. What fear you more?

Qu. I am ashamed to say; 'tis but a fancy.
At break of day, when dreams, they say, are true,
A drowsy slumber, rather than a sleep,
Seized on my senses, with long watching worn.
Methought I stood on a wide river's bank,
Which I must needs o'erpass, but knew not how;
When, on a sudden, Torrismond appeared,
Gave me his hand, and led me lightly o'er,
Leaping and bounding on the billows' heads,
'Till safely we had reached the farther shore.

Ter. This dream portends some ill which you shall 'scape.
Would you see fairer visions, take this night
Your Torrismond within your arms to sleep;
And, to that end, invent some apt pretence
To break with Bertran. 'Twould be better yet,
Could you provoke him to give you th' occasion,
And then to throw him off.

Enter BERTRAN *at a distance.*

Qu. My stars have sent him:
For see, he comes. How gloomily he looks!
If he, as I suspect, have found my love,
His jealousy will furnish him with fury,
And me with means to part.

Bert. [*Aside.*] Shall I upbraid her? Shall I call her false?
If she be false, 'tis what she most desires.
My genius whispers me, be cautious, Bertran;
Thou walk'st as on a narrow mountain's neck,
A dreadful height, with scanty room to tread.

Qu. What business have you at the court, my lord?

Bert. What business, madam!

Qu. Yes, my lord, what business?
'Tis somewhat sure of weighty consequence,
That brings you here so often and unsent for.

Bert. [*Aside.*] 'Tis what I feared; her words are cold enough
To freeze a man to death——May I presume
To speak and to complain?

Qu. They who complain to princes, think them tame.

What bull dares bellow, or what sheep dares bleat
Within the lion's den?
Bert. Yet men are suffered to put Heaven in mind
Of promised blessings; for they then are debts.
Qu. My lord, Heaven knows its own time when to give;
But you, it seems, charge me with breach of faith.
Bert. I hope I need not, madam.
But as, when men in sickness ling'ring lie,
They count the tedious hours by months and years,
So every day deferred to dying lovers,
Is a whole age of pain.
Qu. What if I ne'er consent to make you mine?
My father's promise ties me not to time;
And bonds without a date, they say, are void.
Bert. Far be it from me to believe you bound;
Love is the freest motion of our minds;
Oh, could you see into my secret soul,
There you might read your own dominion doubled,
Both as a queen and mistress! If you leave me,
Know, I can die, but dare not be displeased.
Qu. Sure you affect stupidity, my lord,
Or give me cause to think, that when you lost
Three battles to the Moors, you coldly stood
As unconcerned as now.
Bert. I did my best;
Fate was not in my power.
Qu. And with the like tame gravity you saw
A raw young warrior take your baffled work,
And end it at a blow.
Bert. I humbly take my leave; but they who blast
Your good opinion of me, may have cause
To know I am no coward. [*He is going.*
Qu. Bertran, stay——
[*Aside.*] This may produce some dismal consequence
To him whom dearer than my life I love.
[*To him.*] Have I not managed my contrivance well,
To try your love, and make you doubt of mine?
Bert. Then was it but a trial?
Methinks I start as from some dreadful dream,
And often ask myself if yet I wake.
[*Aside.*] This turn's too quick to be without design;
I'll sound the bottom of it, ere I believe.
Qu. I find your love, and would reward it too;
But anxious fears solicit my weak breast.
I fear my people's faith,
That hot-mouthed beast that bears against the curb,
Hard to be broken even by lawful kings,
But harder by usurpers.
Judge then, my lord, with all these cares oppressed,
If I can think of love.
Bert. Believe me, madam,
These jealousies, however large they spread,
Have but one root, the old imprisoned king,
Whose lenity first pleased the gaping crowd;
But when long tried, and found supinely good,
Like Æsop's log, they leaped upon his back.
Your father knew them well, and when he mounted,
He rein'd them strongly, and he spurred them hard;
And, but he durst not do it all at once,
He had not left alive this patient saint,
This anvil of affronts, but sent him hence,
To hold a peaceful branch of palm above,
And hymn it in the choir.
Qu. You've hit upon the very string, which touched,
Echoes the sound, and jars within my soul:
There lies my grief.
Bert. So long as there's a head,
Thither will all the mounting spirits fly;
Lop that but off, and then——
Qu. My virtue shrinks from such a horrid act.
Bert. This 'tis to have a virtue out of season!
Mercy is good, a very good dull virtue;
But kings mistake its timing, and are mild
When manly courage bids them be severe.
Better be cruel once, than anxious ever.
Remove this threat'ning danger from your crown,
And then securely take the man you love.
Qu. [*Walking aside.*] Ha! let me think a little—that—the man I love!
'Tis true, this murder is the only means
That can secure my throne to Torrismond;
Nay, more, this execution done by Bertran,
Makes him the object of the people's hate.
Bert. [*Aside.*] The more she thinks, 'tis the more work the stronger in her.
Qu. [*Aside.*] How eloquent is mischief to persuade!
Few are so wicked as to take delight
In crimes unprofitable; nor do I.
If then I break divine and human laws,
No bribe but love could gain so bad a cause.
Bert. You answer nothing.
Qu. 'Tis of deep concernment,
And I a woman ignorant and weak.
I leave it all to you: think, what you do,
You do for him I love.
Bert. [*Aside.*] For him she loves!
She named not me: that may be Torrismond,
Whom she has thrice in private seen this day.
Then I am finely caught in mine own snare—
I'll think again—Madam, it shall be done;
And mine be all the blame. [*Ex.*
Qu. Oh, that it were! I would not do the crime;
And yet, like Heaven, permit it to be done.
The priesthood grossly cheat us with free-will;
Will to do what, but what Heaven first decrees?
Our actions then are neither good nor ill,
Since from eternal causes they proceed:
Our passions, fear and anger, love and hate,
Mere senseless engines that are moved by fate;
Like ships on stormy seas without a guide,
Tost by the winds, are driven by the tide.

Enter TORRISMOND.

Tor. Am I not rudely bold, and press too often

Into your presence, madam? If I am——
Qu. No more, lest I should chide you for your stay.
Where have you been, and how could you suppose
That I could live these two long hours without you?
Tor. Oh, words to charm an angel from his orb!
Welcome as kindly showers to long-parched earth!
But I have been in such a dismal place,
Where joy ne'er enters, which the sun ne'er cheers,
Bound in with darkness, overspread with damps;
Where I have seen (if I could say I saw)
The good old king, majestic in his bonds,
And 'midst his griefs most venerably great;
By a dim winking lamp, which feebly broke
The gloomy vapours, he lay stretched along
Upon the unwholesome earth, his eyes fixed upward;
And ever and anon a silent tear
Stole down and trickled from his hoary beard.
Qu. Oh, Heaven! what have I done? My gentle love,
Here end thy sad discourse; and, for my sake,
Cast off these fearful melancholy thoughts.
Tor. My heart is withered at that piteous sight,
As early blossoms are with eastern blasts.
He sent for me, and, while I raised his head,
He threw his aged arms about my neck;
And, seeing that I wept, he pressed me close:
So, leaning cheek to cheek, and eyes to eyes,
We mingled tears in a dumb scene of sorrow.
Qu. Forbear; you know not how you wound my soul.
Tor. Can you have grief, and not have pity too?
He told me, when my father did return,
He had a wondrous secret to disclose.
He kissed me, blessed me; nay, he called me son:
He praised my courage, prayed for my success:
He was so true a father to his country,
To thank me for defending e'en his foes,
Because they were his subjects.
Qu. If they be, then what am I?
Tor. The sovereign of my soul, my earthly Heaven.
Qu. And not your queen?
Tor. You are so beautiful,
So wondrous fair, you justify rebellion;
As if that faultless face could make no sin,
But Heaven, with looking on it, must forgive.
Qu. The king must die, he must, my Torrismond:
Though pity softly plead within my soul,
Yet he must die, that I may make you great,
And give a crown in dowry with my love.
Tor. Perish that crown on any head but yours!
Oh, recollect your thoughts!
Shake not his hour-glass, when his hasty sand
Is ebbing to the last.
A little longer, yet a little longer,
And nature drops him down without your sin,
Like mellow fruit without a winter storm.
Qu. Let me but do this one injustice more:
His doom is past, and for your sake he dies.
Tor. Would you for me have done so ill an act,
And will not do a good one?
Now, by your joys on earth, your hopes in heaven,
Oh, spare this great, this good, this aged king,
And spare your soul the crime!
Qu. The crime's not mine;
'Twas first proposed, and must be done by Bertran,
Fed with false hopes to gain my crown and me.
I, to enhance his ruin, gave no leave;
But barely bade him think, and then resolve.
Tor. In not forbidding, you command the crime.
Think, timely think, on the last dreadful day;
How will you tremble, there to stand exposed,
And foremost in the rank of guilty ghosts,
That must be doomed for murder! Think on murder:
That troop is placed apart from common crimes;
The damned themselves start wide, and shun that band,
As far more black, and more forlorn than they.
Qu. 'Tis terrible; it shakes, it staggers me.
I knew this truth, but I repelled that thought.
Sure there is none but fears a future state;
And when the most obdurate swear they do not,
Their trembling hearts belie their boasting tongues.

Enter TERESA.

Send speedily to Bertran; charge him strictly
Not to proceed, but wait my further pleasure.
Ter. Madam, he sends to tell you 'tis performed. [*Exit.*
Tor. Ten thousand plagues consume him! furies drag him!
Fiends tear him! Blasted be the arm that struck,
The tongue that ordered! only she be spared,
That hindered not the deed! Oh, where was then
The power that guards the sacred lives of kings?
Why slept the lightning and the thunder-bolts,
Or bent their idle rage on fields and trees,
When vengeance called them here!
Qu. Sleep that thought too.
'Tis done; and since 'tis done, 'tis past recall;
And since 'tis past recall, must be forgotten.
Tor. Oh, never, never shall it be forgotten!
High Heaven will not forget it; after ages
Shall with a fearful curse remember ours,
And blood shall never leave the nation more.
Qu. His body shall be royally interred,
And the last funeral pomps adorn his hearse.
I will myself (as I have cause too just)
Be the chief mourner at his obsequies;
And yearly fix, on the revolving day,
The solemn mark of mourning, to atone
And expiate my offences.
Tor. Nothing can,

But bloody vengeance on that traitor's head,
Which, dear departed spirit, here I vow.
Qu. Here end our sorrows, and begin our joys.
Love calls, my Torrismond; though hate has raged,
And ruled the day, yet love will rule the night.
The spiteful stars have shed their venom down,
And now the peaceful planets take their turn.
This deed of Bertran's has removed all fears,
And given me just occasion to refuse him.
What hinders now, but that the holy priest
In secret join our mutual vows? And then
This night, this happy night, is yours and mine.

Tor. Be still my sorrows, and be loud my joys!
Fly to the utmost circles of the sea,
Thou furious tempest that hath tost my mind,
And leave no thought but Leonora there.—
What's this?——I feel a boding in my soul,
As if this day were fatal——Be it so.
Fate shall but have the leavings of my love,
My joys are gloomy, but withal are great.
The lion, though he sees the toils are set,
Yet, pinched with raging hunger, scow'rs away,
Hunts in the face of danger all the day,
At night, with sullen pleasure, grumbles o'er his prey. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Before* GOMEZ's *door.*

Enter LORENZO, DOMINICK, *and two Soldiers at a distance.*

Dom. I'll not wag an ace farther; the whole world will not bribe me to it, for my conscience will digest these gross enormities no longer.

Lor. How! thy conscience not digest them! There's ne'er a friar in Spain can shew a conscience that comes near it for digestion. It digested pimping, when I sent thee with my letter; and it digested perjury, when thou sworest thou didst not know me: I'm sure it has digested me fifty pounds of as hard gold as is in all Barbary: Pr'ythee, why should'st thou discourage fornication, when thou know'st thou lovest a sweet young girl?

Dom. Away, away; I do not love them;—phau; no—[*Spits.*] I do not love a pretty girl ——you are so waggish. [*Spits again.*

Lor. Why, thy mouth waters at the very mention of them.

Dom. You take a mighty pleasure in defamation, colonel; but I wonder what you find in running restless up and down, breaking your brains, emptying your purse, and wearing out your body with hunting after unlawful game.

Lor. Why, there's the satisfaction on't.

Dom. This incontinency may proceed to adultery, and adultery to murder, and murder to hanging; and there's the satisfaction on't.

Lor. I'll not hang alone, frair; I'm resolved to peach thee before thy superiors for what thou hast done already.

Dom I am resolved to forswear it if you do; let me advise you better, colonel, than to accuse a churchman to churchmen; in the common cause we are all of a piece; we hang together.

Lor. [*Aside.*] If you don't, it were no matter if you did.

Dom. Nay, if you talk of peaching, I'll peach first, and see whose oath will be believed; I'll trounce you for offering to corrupt my honesty and bribe my conscience; you shall be summoned by an host of paritors; you shall be sentenced in the spiritual court; you shall be excommunicated; you shall be outlawed;——and—[*Here* LORENZO *takes a purse, and plays with it, and, at last, lets the purse fall chinking to the ground; which the friar eyes.*]——[*In another tone.*] I say, a man might do this now, he were maliciously disposed, and had a mind to bring matters to extremity; but, considering that you are my friend, a person of honour, and a worthy good charitable man, I would rather lose a thousand deaths than disoblige you. [LORENZO *takes up the purse, and pours it into the friar's sleeve.*] Nay, good sir; nay, dear colonel. Oh, Lord, sir, what are you doing now? I protest this must not be; without this I would have served you to the uttermost; pray command me. A jealous, foul-mouthed rogue this Gomez is: I saw how he used you, and you marked how he used me too: Oh, he's a bitter man; but we'll join our forces; ah, shall we, colonel? We'll be revenged on him with a witness.

Lor. But how shall I send her word to be ready at the door? for I must reveal it in confession to you, that I mean to carry her away this evening, by the help of these two soldiers. I know Gomez suspects you, and you will hardly gain admittance.

Dom. Let me alone; I fear him not; I am armed with the authority of my cloathing; yonder I see him keeping centry at his door: Have you never seen a citizen, in a cold morning, clapping his sides, and walking forward and backward, a mighty pace, before his shop? But I'll gain the pass in spite of his suspicion; stand you aside, and do but mark how I accost him.

Lor. If he meet with a repulse, we must throw off the fox's skin, and put on the lion's: Come, gentlemen, you'll stand by me.

Sold. Do not doubt us, colonel.

[*They retire all three to a corner of the stage,* DOMIN. *goes to the door where* GOMEZ *stands.*

Dom. Good even, Gomez. How does your wife?

Gom. Just as you'd have her, thinking on nothing but her dear colonel, and conspiring cuckoldom against me.

Dom. I dare say you wrong her; she is employing her thoughts how to cure you of your jealousy.

Gom. Yes, by certainty.

Dom. By your leave, Gomez; I have some spiritual advice to impart to her on that subject.

Gom. You may spare your instructions, if you please, father, she has no further need of them.

Dom. How, no need of them! Do you speak in riddles?

Gom. Since you will have me speak plainer, she has profited so well already by your counsel, that she can say her lesson without your teaching: Do you understand me now?

Dom. I must not neglect my duty, for all that; once again, Gomez, by your leave.

Gom. She's a little indisposed at present, and it will not be convenient to disturb her.

[DOMINICK *offers to go by him, but the other stands before him.*

Dom. Indisposed, say you? Oh, it is upon those occasions that a confessor is most necessary; I think it was my good angel that sent me hither so opportunely.

Gom. Ay, whose good angel sent you hither, that you best know, father.

Dom. A word or two of devotion will do her no harm, I'm sure.

Gom. A little sleep will do her more good, I'm sure: you know she disburthened her conscience but this morning to you.

Dom. But, if she be ill this afternoon, she may have new occasion to confess.

Gom. Indeed, as you order matters with the colonel, she may have occasion of confessing herself every hour.

Dom. Pray, how long has she been sick?

Gom. Lord, you will force a man to speak; why, ever since your last defeat.

Dom. This can be but some light indisposition; it will not last, and I may see her.

Gom. How, not last! I say, it will last, and it shall last; she shall be sick these seven or eight days, and perhaps longer, as I see occasion. What! I know the mind of her sickness a little better than you do.

Dom. I find, then, I must bring a doctor.

Gom. And he'll bring an apothecary, with a chargeable long bill of Ana's; those of my family have the grace to die cheaper. In a word, Sir Dominick, we understand one another's business here; I am resolved to stand like the Swiss of my own family, to defend the entrance; you may mumble over your *pater nosters*, if you please, and try if you can make my doors fly open, and batter down my walls with bell, book, and candle; but I am not of opinion, that you are holy enough to commit miracles.

Dom. Men of my order are not to be treated after this manner.

Gom. I would treat the pope and his cardinals in the same manner, if they offered to see my wife without my leave.

Dom. I excommunicate thee from the church, if thou dost not open; there's promulgation coming out.

Gom. And I excommunicate you from my wife, if you go to that; there's promulgation for promulgation, and bull for bull; and so I leave you to recreate yourself with the end of an old song—*And sorrow come to the old friar.*

[*Exit.*

Enter LORENZO *and Soldiers.*

Lor. I will not ask you your success; for I overheard part of it, and saw the conclusion. I find we are now put upon our last trump; the fox is earthed, but I shall send my two terriers in after him.

Sold. I warrant you, colonel, we'll unkennel him.

Lor. And make what haste you can, to bring out the lady; what say you, father? Burglary is but a venial sin among soldiers.

Dom. I shall absolve them, because he is an enemy of the church.—There is a proverb, I confess, which says, that dead men tell no tales; but let your soldiers apply it at their own perils.

Lor. What, take away a man's wife, and kill him too!—The wickedness of this old villain startles me, and gives me a twinge for my own sin, though it comes far short of his; hark you, soldiers, be sure you use as little violence to him as possible.

Dom. Hold a little; I have thought better how to secure him, with less danger to us.

Lor. Oh, miracle! the friar is grown conscientious!

Dom. The old king, you know, is just murdered, and the persons that did it are unknown; let the soldiers seize him for one of the assassinates, and let me alone to accuse him afterwards.

Lor. I cry thee mercy with all my heart, for suspecting a friar of the least good-nature; what, would you accuse him wrongfully?

Dom. I must confess 'tis wrongful *quoad hoc*, as to the fact itself; but 'tis rightful *quoad hunc*, as to this heretical rogue, whom we must dispatch: he has railed against the church, which is a fouler crime than the murder of a thousand kings; *omne majus continet in se minus*: he that is an enemy to the church is an enemy unto heaven; and he that is an enemy to heaven, would have killed the king if he had been in the circumstances of doing it; so it is not wrongful to accuse him.

Lor. I never knew a churchman, if he were personally offended, but he would bring in heaven by hook or crook into his quarrel. Soldiers, do as you were first ordered. [*Exeunt Soldiers.*

Dom. What was't you ordered them? Are you sure it is safe, and not scandalous?

Lor. Somewhat near your own design, but not altogether so mischievous; the people are infinitely discontented, as they have reason; and

mutinies there are, or will be, against the queen; now I am content to put him thus far into the plot, that he should be secured as a traitor; but he shall only be prisoner at the soldiers' quarters: and when I am out of reach, he shall be released.

Dom. And what will become of me then? For when he is free, he will infallibly accuse me.

Lor. Why then, father, you must have recourse to your infallible church-remedies, lie impudently, and swear devoutly; and, as you told me but now, let him try whose oath will be first believed. Retire, I hear them coming.

[*They withdraw.*

Enter the Soldiers, with GOMEZ *struggling on their backs.*

Gom. Help, good Christians, help, neighbours; my house is broken open by force, and I am ravished, and am like to be assassinated. What do you mean, villains? Will you carry me away like a pedlar's pack upon your backs? Will you murder a man in plain day-light?

1*st Sol.* No; but we'll secure you for a traitor, and for being in a plot against the state.

Gom. Who, I in a plot? Oh, Lord! Oh, Lord! I never durst be in a plot. Why, how can you in conscience suspect a rich citizen of so much wit as to make a plotter? There are none but poor rogues, and those that cann't live without it, that are in plots.

2*d Sol.* Away with him, away with him.

Gom. Oh, my gold! my wife! my wife! my gold! As I hope to be saved now, I know no more of the plot than they that made it.

[*They carry him off, and exeunt.*

Lor. Thus far have we sailed with a merry gale, now we have the Cape of Good Hope in sight; the trade-wind is our own, if we can but double it. [*He looks out.*] [*Aside.*] Ah, my father and Pedro stand at the corner of the street with company; there's no stirring till they are past.

Enter ELVIRA *with a casket.*

Elv. Am I come at last into your arms?

Lor. Fear nothing; the adventure's ended, and the knight may carry off the lady safely.

Elv. I'm so overjoyed, I can scarce believe I am at liberty; but stand panting, like a bird that has often beaten her wings in vain against her cage, and at last dares hardly venture out, though she sees it open.

Dom. Lose no time, but make haste while the way is free for you; and thereupon I give you my benediction.

Lor. 'Tis not so free as you suppose; for there's an old gentleman of my acquaintance that blocks up the passage at the corner of the street.

Dom. What have you gotten there under your arm, daughter? Somewhat, I hope, that will bear your charges on your pilgrimage.

Lor. The friar has an hawk's eye to gold and jewels.

Elv. Here's that will make you dance without a fiddle, and provide a better entertainment for us than hedges in summer and barns in winter. Here's the very heart, and soul, and life-blood of Gomez; pawns in abundance, old gold of widows, and new gold of prodigals; and pearls and diamonds of court ladies, till the next bribe helps their husbands to redeem them.

Dom. They are the spoils of the wicked, and the church endows you with them.

Lor. And, faith, we'll drink the church's health out of them. But all this while I stand on thorns: pr'ythee, dear, look out, and see if the coast be free for our escape; for I dare not peep for fear of being known.

[ELVIRA *goes to look out, and* GOMEZ *comes running in upon her; she shrieks out.*

Gom. Thanks to my stars, I have recovered my own territories—What do I see! I'm ruined! I'm undone! I'm betrayed!

Dom. [*Aside.*] What a hopeful enterprise is here spoiled!

Gom. Oh, colonel, are you there? and you, friar? nay, then I find how the world goes.

Lor. Chear up, man, thou art out of jeopardy; I heard thee crying out just now, and came running in full speed with the wings of an eagle and the feet of a tiger to thy rescue.

Gom. Ay, you are always at hand to do me a courtesy with your eagle's feet and your tiger's wings: and what were you here for, friar?

Dom. To interpose my spiritual authority in your behalf.

Gom. And why did you shriek out, gentlewoman?

Elv. 'Twas joy at your return.

Gom. And that casket under your arm, for what end and purpose?

Elv. Only to preserve it from the thieves.

Gom. And you came running out of doors—

Elv. Only to meet you, sweet husband.

Gom. A fine evidence summed up among you. I thank you heartily; you are all my friends. The colonel was walking by accidentally, and hearing my voice, came in to save me; the friar, who was hobbling the same way too, accidentally again, and not knowing of the colonel, I warrant you, he comes in to pray for me; and my faithful wife runs out of doors to meet me with all my jewels under her arm, and shrieks out for joy at my return. But if my father-in-law had not met your soldiers, colonel, and delivered me in the nick, I should neither have found a friend nor a friar here, and might have shrieked out for joy myself, for the loss of my jewels and my wife.

Dom. Art thou an infidel? Wilt thou not believe us?

Gom. Such churchmen as you would make any man an infidel. Get you into your kennel, gentlewoman! I shall thank you within doors for your safe custody of my jewels and your own. [*He thrusts his wife off the stage.*] [*Exit* ELVIRA.] As for you, Colonel Huffcap, we shall try before a civil magistrate who's the greatest plotter of us two, I against the state, or you against the petticoat.

Lor. Nay, if you will complain, you shall for something. [*Beats him.*

Gom. Murder! murder! I give up the ghost! I am destroyed! Help! murder! murder!

Dom. Away, colonel, let us fly for our lives: the neighbours are coming out with forks, and fire-shovels, and spits, and other domestic weapons: the militia of a whole alley is raised against us.

Lor. This is but the interest of my debt, master usurer, the principal shall be paid you at our next meeting.

Dom. Ah, if your soldiers had but dispatched him, his tongue had been laid asleep, colonel; but this comes of not following good counsel; ah—— [*Exeunt* LOR. *and Friar severally.*

Gom. I'll be revenged of him, if I dare; but he's such a terrible fellow, that my mind misgives me; I shall tremble when I have him before the judge: all my misfortunes come together: I have been robbed and cuckolded, and ravished, and beaten, in one quarter of an hour; my poor limbs smart, and my poor head aches; ay, do, do, smart limb, ache head, and sprout horns; but I'll be hanged before I'll pity you: you must needs be married, must ye? There's for that, [*Beats his own head.*] and to a fine, young, modish lady, must ye? There's for that too; and, at threescore, you old, doting cuckold, take that remembrance——A fine time of day for a man to be bound 'prentice, when he is past using his trade: to set up an equipage of noise, when he has most need of quiet; instead of her being under covert-baron, to be under covert-femme myself; to have my body disabled, and my head fortified; and lastly, to be crowded into a narrow box with a shrill treble,

That with one blast, through the whole house does bound,
And first taught speaking-trumpets how to sound. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Court.*

Enter RAYMOND, ALPHONSO, *and* PEDRO.

Ped. Are these, are these, ye powers, the promised joys,
With which I flattered my long, tedious absence,
To find, at my return, my master murdered!
Oh, that I could but weep, to vent my passion!
But this dry sorrow burns up all my tears.

Alph. Mourn inward, brother; 'tis observed at court,
Who weeps, and who wears black; an your return
Will fix all eyes on every act of yours,
To see how you resent King Sancho's death.

Ray. What generous man can live with that constraint
Upon his soul, to bear, much less to flatter
A court like this! Can I sooth tyranny?
Seem pleased to see my royal master murder'd,
His crown usurp'd, a distaff in a throne,
A council made of such as dare not speak,
And could not, if they durst; whence honest men
Banish themselves, for shame of being there:
A government, that, knowing not true wisdom,
Is scorn'd abroad, and lives on tricks at home?

Alph. Virtue must be thrown off; 'tis a coarse garment,
Too heavy for the sun-shine of a court.

Ray. Well then, I will dissemble for an end
So great, so pious, as a just revenge:
You'll join with me?

Alph. No honest man but must.

Ped. What title has this queen but lawless force?
And force must pull her down.

Alph. Truth is, I pity Leonora's case;
Forced, for her safety, to commit a crime
Which most her soul abhors.

Ray. All she has done, or e'er can do, of good,
This one black deed has damned.

Ped. You'll hardly join your son to our design.

Ray. Your reason for't?

Ped. I want time to unriddle it:
Put on your t'other face; the queen approaches.

Enter the Queen, BERTRAN, *and Attendants.*

Ray. And that accursed Bertran
Stalks close behind her, like a witch's fiend,
Pressing to be employ'd. Stand, and observe them.

Qu. [*To* BERT.] Buried in private, and so suddenly!
It crosses my design, which was to allow
The rites of funeral fitting his degree,
With all the pomp of mourning.

Bert. It was not safe:
Objects of pity, when the cause is new,
Would work too fiercely on the giddy crowd.
Had Cæsar's body never been exposed,
Brutus had gain'd his cause.

Qu. Then was he loved?

Ber. O, never man so much for saint-like goodness.

Ped. [*Aside.*] Had bad men feared him but as good men loved him,
He had not yet been sainted.

Qu. I wonder how the people bear his death.

Bert. Some discontents there are; some idle murmurs.

Ped. How, idle murmurs! let me plainly speak:
The doors are all shut up; the wealthier sort,
With arms across, and hats upon their eyes,
Walk to and fro before their silent shops:
Whole droves of lenders crowd the bankers' doors,
To call in money; those who have none, mark
Where money goes; for when they rise, 'tis plunder:
The rabble gather round the man of news,
And listen with their mouths:
Some tell, some hear, some judge of news, some make it:
And he who lies most loud, is most believed.

Qu. This may be dangerous.

Ray. [*Aside.*] Pray Heaven it may.

Bert. If one of you must fall,
Self-preservation is the first of laws;
And if, when subjects are oppress'd by kings,
They justify rebellion by that law,

As well may monarchs turn the edge of right
To cut for them, when self-defence requires it.
Qu. You place such arbitrary power in kings,
That I much fear, if I should make you one,
You'll make yourself a tyrant. Let these know
By what authority you did this act.
Bert. You much surprise me to demand that question:
But since truth must be told, 'twas by your own.
Qu. Produce it; or, by Heaven, your head shall answer
The forfeit of your tongue.
Ray. [*Aside.*] Brave mischief towards!
Bert. You bade me.
Qu. When and where?
Bert. No, I confess, you bade me not in words;
The dial spoke not, but it made shrewd signs,
And pointed full upon the stroke of murder;
Yet this you said,
You were a woman ignorant and weak,
So left it to my care.
Qu. What, if I said,
I was a woman ignorant and weak,
Were you to take the advantage of my sex,
And play the devil to tempt me? You contrived,
You urged, you drove me headlong to your toils;
And if, much tired, and frightened more, I paused,
Were you to make my doubts your own commission?
Bert. This 'tis to serve a prince too faithfully;
Who, free from laws himself, will have that done,
Which, not performed, brings us to sure disgrace,
And, if performed, to ruin.
Qu. This 'tis to counsel things that are unjust;
First, to debauch a king to break his laws,
(Which are his safety,) and then seek protection
From him you have endangered; but just heaven,
Where sins are judged, will damn the tempting devil,
More deep than those he tempted.
Bert. If princes not protect their ministers,
What man will dare to serve them?
Qu. None will dare
To serve them ill, when they are left to laws;
But when a counsellor, to save himself,
Would lay miscarriages upon his prince,
Exposing him to public rage and hate,
O, 'tis an act as infamously base,
As, should a common soldier sculk behind,
And thrust his general in the front of war:
It shews, he only served himself before,
And had no sense of honour, country, king;
But centered on himself; and used his master,
As guardians do their wards, with shews of care,
But with intent to sell the public safety,
And pocket up his prince.
Ped. [*Aside.*] Well said, i'faith.
This speech is e'en too good for an usurper.
Bert. I see for whom I must be sacrificed;
And, had I not been sotted with my zeal,
I might have found it sooner.
Qu. From my sight!
The prince who bears an insolence like this,
Is such an image of the powers above,
As is the statue of the thundering god,
Whose bolts the boys may play with.
Bert. Unrevenged
I will not fall, nor single. [*Exit.*
Qu. [*To* RAY. *who kisses her hand.*] Welcome, welcome:
I saw you not before: one honest lord
Is hid with ease among a crowd of courtiers:
How can I be too grateful to the father
Of such a son as Torrismond?
Ray. His actions were but duty.
Qu. Yet, my lord,
All have not paid that debt, like noble Torrismond.
You hear, how Bertran brands me with a crime,
Of which, your son can witness, I am free;
I sent to stop the murder, but too late;
For crimes are swift, but penitence is slow.
The bloody Bertran, diligent in ill,
Flew to prevent the soft returns of pity.
Ray. O cursed haste, of making sure a sin!
Can you forgive the traitor?
Qu. Never, never;
'Tis written here in characters so deep,
That, seven years hence, (till then should I not meet him,)
And in the temple then, I'll drag him thence,
Even from the holy altar to the block.
Ray. [*Aside.*] She's fired, as I would wish her.
Aid me, justice,
As all my ends are thine, to gain this point,
And ruin both at once.—It wounds indeed, [*To her.*
To bear affronts too great to be forgiven,
And not have power to punish; yet one way
There is to ruin Bertran.
Qu. O, there's none;
Except an host from heaven can make such haste
To save my crown, as he will do to seize it.
You saw he came surrounded with his friends,
And knew, besides, our army was removed
To quarters too remote for sudden use.
Ray. Yet you may give commission
To some bold man, whose loyalty you trust,
And let him raise the train-bands of the city.
Qu. Gross-feeders, lion-talkers, lamb-like fighters!
Ray. You do not know the virtues of your city,
What pushing force they have; some popular chief,
More noisy than the rest, but cries halloo,
And in a trice, the bellowing herd come out;
The gates are barred, the ways are barricadoed,
And one and all's the word; true cocks o' th' game,
That never ask, for what, or whom they fight;
But turn 'em out, and shew 'em but a foe,
Cry liberty, and that's a cause for quarrel.
Qu. There may be danger, in that boist'rous rout;
Who knows, when fires are kindled for my foes,
But some new blast of wind may turn those flames

Against my palace walls?
Ray. But still their chief
Must be some one whose loyalty you trust.
Qu. And who more proper for that trust than you,
Whose interests, though unknown to you, are mine?
Alphonso, Pedro, haste to raise the rabble,
He shall appear to head 'em.
Ray. [*Aside to* ALPH. *and* PED.] First seize Bertran,
And then insinuate to them, that I bring
Their lawful prince to place upon the throne.
Alph. Our lawful prince?
Ray. Fear not: I can produce him.
Ped. [*To* ALPH.] Now we want your son Lorenzo: what a mighty faction
Would he make for us of the city wives,
With,—O, dear husband, my sweet honey husband,
Won't you be for the colonel? If you love me,
Be for the colonel! O, he's the finest man!
[*Exit.*
Ray. [*Aside.*] So, now we have a plot behind the plot;
She thinks she's in the depth of my design,
And that it's all for her; but time shall show,
She only lives to help me ruin others,
And last, to fall herself.
Qu. Now to you, Raymond: Can you guess no reason
Why I repose such confidence in you?
You needs must think
There's some more powerful cause than loyalty;
Will you not speak, to save a lady's blush?
Must I inform you 'tis for Torrismond
That all this grace is shewn?
Ray. [*Aside.*] By all the powers, worse, worse, than what I feared.
Qu. And yet, what need I blush at such a choice?
I love a man whom I am proud to love,
And am well pleased my inclination gives
What gratitude would force. O pardon me;
I ne'er was covetous of wealth before;
Yet think so vast a treasure as your son
Too great for any private man's possession:
And him too rich a jewel to be set
In vulgar metal, or for vulgar use.
Ray. Arm me with patience, heaven!
Qu. How, patience, Raymond?
What exercise of patience have you here?
What find you in my crown to be contemn'd,
Or in my person loath'd? Have I, a queen,
Pass'd by my fellow-rulers of the world,
Whose vying crowns lay glittering in my way,
As if the world were paved with diadems?
Have I refused their blood, to mix with yours,
And raise new kingdoms from so obscure a race,
Fate scarce knew where to find them when I call'd?
Have I heap'd on my person, crown, and state,
To load the scale, and weigh'd myself with earth,
For you to spurn the balance?
Ray. Bate the last, and 'tis what I would say:
Can I, can any loyal subject, see
With patience such a stoop from sovereignty,
An ocean poured upon a narrow brook?
My zeal for you must lay the father by,
And plead my country's cause against my son.
What though his heart be great, his actions gallant,
He wants a crown to poise against a crown,
Birth to match birth, and power to balance power.
Qu. All these I have, and these I can bestow,
But he brings worth and virtue to my bed;
And virtue is the wealth which tyrants want.
I stand in need of one, whose glories may
Redeem my crimes, ally me to his fame,
Dispel the factions of my foes on earth,
Disarm the justice of the powers above.
Ray. The people never will endure this choice.
Qu. If I endure it, what imports it you?
Go raise the ministers of my revenge,
Guide with your breath this whirling tempest round,
And see its fury fall where I design;
At last a time for just revenge is given;
Revenge, the darling attribute of heaven:
But man, unlike his Maker, bears too long;
Still more exposed, the more he pardons wrong;
Great in forgiving, and in suffering brave,
To be a saint, he makes himself a slave. [*Exit.*
Ray. Marriage with Torrismond! it must not be;
By Heaven, it must not be; or, if it be,
Law, justice, honour, bid farewell to earth,
For heaven leaves all to tyrants.

Enter TORRISMOND, *who kneels to him.*

Tor. O, ever welcome, sir,
But doubly now! You come in such a time,
As if propitious fortune took a care
To swell my tide of joys to their full height,
And leave me nothing farther to desire.
Ray. I hope I come in time, if not to make,
At least to save your fortune and your honour;
Take heed you steer your vessel right, my son:
This calm of heaven, this mermaid's melody,
Into an unseen whirlpool draws you fast,
And in a moment sinks you.
Tor. Fortune cannot,
And fate can scarce; I've made the port already,
And laugh securely at the lazy storm
That wanted wings to reach me in the deep.
Your pardon, sir; my duty calls me hence;
I go to find my queen, my earthly goddess,
To whom I owe my hopes, my life, my love.
Ray. You owe her more, perhaps, than you imagine;
Stay, I command you stay, and hear me first.
This hour's the very crisis of your fate;
Your good or ill, your infamy or fame,
And all the colour of your life, depends
On this important now.
Tor. I see no danger;
The city, army, court, espouse my cause,
And, more than all, the queen, with public favour,
Indulges my pretensions to her love.

Ray. Nay, if possessing her can make you happy,
'Tis granted; nothing hinders your design.
Tor. If she can make me blest! she only can:
Empire and wealth, and all she brings beside,
Are but the train and trappings of her love:
The sweetest, kindest, truest of her sex,
In whose possession years roll round on years,
And joys in circles meet new joys again:
Kisses, embraces, languishing, and death,
Still from each other to each other move,
To crown the various seasons of our love;
And doubt you if such love can make me happy?
Ray. Yes, for I think you love your honour more.
Tor. And what can shock my honour in a queen?
Ray. A tyrant, an usurper!
Tor. Grant she be;
When from the conqueror we hold our lives,
We yield ourselves his subjects from that hour;
For mutual benefits make mutual ties.
Ray. Why, can you think I owe a thief my life,
Because he took it not by lawless force?
What, if he did not all the ill he could,
Am I obliged by that to assist his rapines,
And to maintain his murders?
Tor. Not to maintain, but bear them unrevenged.
Kings' titles commonly begin by force,
Which time wears off, and mellows into right;
So power, which in one age is tyranny,
Is ripened in the next to true succession:
She's in possession.
Ray. So diseases are:
Should not a lingering fever be removed,
Because it long has raged within my blood?
Do I rebel when I would thrust it out?
What, shall I think the world was made for one,
And men are born for kings, as beasts for men,
Not for protection, but to be devoured?
Mark those who dote on arbitrary power,
And you shall find them either hot-brained youth,
Or needy bankrupts, servile in their greatness,
And slaves to some, to lord it o'er the rest.
O baseness, to support a tyrant throne,
And crush your free-born brethren of the world!
Nay, to become a part of usurpation;
T' espouse the tyrant's person and her crimes,
And on a tyrant get a race of tyrants,
To be your country's curse in after-ages.
Tor. I see no crime in her whom I adore,
Or, if I do, her beauty makes it none;
Look on me as a man abandoned o'er
To an eternal lethargy of love;
To pull, and pinch, and wound me, cannot cure,
And but disturb the quiet of my death.
Ray. Oh, Virtue, Virtue! what art thou become,
That man should leave thee for that toy, a woman,
Made from the dross and refuse of a man!
Heaven took him sleeping when he made her, too:
Had man been waking, he had ne'er consented.
Now, son, suppose
Some brave conspiracy were ready formed,
To punish tyrants and redeem the land,
Could you so far belie your country's hope,
As not to head the party?
Tor. How could my hand rebel against my heart?
Ray. How could your heart rebel against your reason?
Tor. No honour bids me fight against myself;
The royal family is all extinct,
And she who reigns bestows her crown on me.
So, must I be ungrateful to the living,
To be but vainly pious to the dead;
While you defraud your offspring of their fate.
Ray. Mark who defraud their offspring, you or I;
For, know, there yet survives the lawful heir
Of Sancho's blood, whom, when I shall produce,
I rest assured to see you pale with fear,
And trembling at his name.
Tor. He must be more than man who makes me tremble:
I dare him to the field, with all the odds
Of justice on his side, against my tyrant.
Produce your lawful prince, and you shall see
How brave a rebel love has made your son.
Ray. Read that; 'tis with the royal signet signed,
And given me by the king, when time should serve,
To be perused by you.
Tor. [*Reads.*] "I the king:
My youngest and alone surviving son,
Reported dead t' escape rebellious rage,
Till happier times shall call his courage forth
To break my fetters, or revenge my fate,
I will that Raymond educate as his,
And call him Torrismond."——
If I am he, that son, that Torrismond,
The world contains not so forlorn a wretch!
Let never man believe he can be happy;
For when I thought my fortune most secure,
One fatal moment tears me from my joys;
And when two hearts were joined by mutual love,
The sword of justice cuts upon the knot,
And severs them for ever.
Ray. True, it must.
Tor. Oh, cruel man, to tell me that it must!
If you have any pity in your breast,
Redeem me from this labyrinth of fate,
And plunge me in my first obscurity.
The secret is alone between us two;
And though you would not hide me from myself,
Oh, yet be kind, conceal me from the world,
And be my father still.
Ray. Your lot's too glorious, and the proofs too plain.
Now, in the name of honour, sir, I beg you,
(Since I must use authority no more)
On these old knees I beg you, ere I die,
That I may see your father's death revenged.
Tor. Why, 'tis the only business of my life;
My order's issued to recall the army,

And Bertran's death's resolved.
Ray. And not the queen's? Oh, she's the chief offender!
Shall justice turn her edge within your hand?
No, if she 'scape, you are yourself the tyrant,
And murderer of your father.
Tor. Cruel fates,
To what have you reserved me?
Ray. Why that sigh?
Tor. Since you must know, (but break, oh, break my heart,
Before I tell my fatal story out!)
Th' usurper of my throne, my house's ruin,
The murderer of my father—is my wife!
Ray. Oh, horror, horror!—After this alliance,
Let tigers match with hinds, and wolves with sheep,
And every creature couple with his foe.
How vainly man designs, when Heaven opposes!
I bred you up to arms, raised you to power,
Permitted you to fight for this usurper,
Indeed, to save a crown, not her's but your's;
All to make sure the vengeance of this day,
Which even this day has ruined. One more question
Let me but ask, and I have done for ever:
Do you yet love the cause of all your woes,
Or is she grown (as sure she ought to be)
More odious to your sight than toads and adders?
Tor. Oh, there's the utmost malice of my fate,
That I am bound to hate and born to love!
Ray. No more—Farewell, my much-lamented king!
[*Aside.*] I dare not trust him with himself so far,
To own him to the people as their king,
Before their rage has finished my designs
On Bertran and the queen. But, in despite
Even of himself, I'll save him. [*Exit* RAY.
Tor. 'Tis but a moment since I have been king,
And weary on't already. I'm a lover,
And loved, possess; yet all these make me wretched,
And Heaven has given me blessings for a curse.
With what a load of vengeance am I press'd!
Yet never, never can I hope for rest;
For when my heavy burden I remove,
The weight falls down, and crushes her I love.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Bed Chamber.*

Enter TORRISMOND.

Tor. Love, justice, nature, pity, and revenge,
Have kindled up a wild-fire in my breast,
And I am all a civil war within.

Enter Queen and TERESA *at a distance.*

My Leonora there!
Mine! is she mine? My father's murderer mine?
Oh, that I could, with honour, love her more,
Or hate her less with reason!—See, she weeps;
Thinks me unkind, or false, and knows not why
I thus estrange my person from her bed.
Shall I not tell her? No; 'twill break her heart:
She'll know too soon her own and my misfortunes. [*Exit.*
Qu. He's gone, and I am lost! Didst thou not see
His sullen eyes, how gloomily they glanced?
He looked not like the Torrismond I loved.
Ter. Can you not guess from whence this change proceeds?
Qu. No, there's the grief, Teresa. Oh, Teresa!
Fain would I tell thee what I feel within,
But shame and modesty have tied my tongue!
Yet I will tell, that thou may'st weep with me,
How dear, how sweet his first embraces were;
With what a zeal he joined his lips to mine,
And sucked my breath at every word I spoke,
As if he drew his inspiration thence;
While both our souls came upward to our mouths,
As neighbouring monarchs at their borders meet.
I thought—Oh, no, 'tis false, I could not think!
'Twas neither life nor death, but both in one.
Ter. Then sure his transports were not less than yours?
Qu. More, more! for by the high-hung tapers' light
I could discern his cheeks were glowing red,
His very eye-balls trembled with his love,
And sparkled through their casements humid fire:
He sighed, and kissed, breathed short, and would have spoke,
But was too fierce to throw away the time;
All he could say was love, and Leonora.
Ter. How then can you suspect him lost so soon?
Qu. Last night he flew not with a bridegroom's haste,
Which eagerly prevents the appointed hour.
I told the clocks, and watched the wasting light,
And listened to each softly-treading step,
In hope 'twas he; but still it was not he.
At last he came, but with such altered looks,
So wild, so ghastly, as if some ghost had met him.
All pale, and speechless, he surveyed me round;
Then with a groan he threw himself in bed,
But far from me, as far as he could move,
And sighed, and tossed, and turned, but still from me.
Ter. What, all the night?

Qu. Even all the livelong night.
At last (for, blushing, I must tell thee all)
I pressed his hand, and laid me by his side;
He pulled it back, as if he touched a serpent.
With that I burst into a flood of tears,
And asked him how I had offended him?
He answered nothing but with sighs and groans;
So restless passed the night; and at the dawn,
Leaped from the bed, and vanished.
Ter. Sighs and groans,
Paleness and trembling, all are signs of love.
He only fears to make you share his sorrows.
Qu. I wish 'twere so; but love still doubts the worst.
My heavy heart, the prophetess of woes,
Forebodes some ill at hand. To sooth my sadness,
Sing me the song which poor Olympia made,
When false Bireno left her.

SONG.

Farewell, ungrateful traitor,
Farewell, my perjured swain;
Let never injured creature
Believe a man again.
The pleasure of possessing
Surpasses all expressing,
But 'tis too short a blessing,
And love too long a pain.

'Tis easy to deceive us,
In pity of your pain;
But when we love you leave us
To rail at you in vain.
Before we have descried it,
There is no bliss beside it;
But she that once has tried it,
Will never love again.

The passion you pretended,
Was only to obtain;
But when the charm is ended,
The charmer you disdain.
Your love by ours we measure,
Till we have lost our treasure;
But dying is a pleasure,
When living is a pain.

Re-enter TORRISMOND.

Tor. Still she is here, and still I cannot speak;
But wander like some discontented ghost,
That oft appears, but is forbid to talk.
[*Going again.*
Qu. Oh, Torrismond, if you resolve my death,
You need no more but to go hence again!
Will you not speak?
Tor. I cannot.
Qu. Speak, oh, speak!
Your anger would be kinder than your silence.
Tor. Oh!
Qu. Do not sigh, or tell me why you sigh.
Tor. Why do I live, ye powers!
Qu. Why do I live to hear you speak that word?
Some black-mouthed villain has defamed my virtue.
Tor. No, no! pray, let me go.
Qu. [*Kneeling.*] You shall not go.
By all the pleasures of our nuptial bed,
If ever I was loved, though now I'm not,
By these true tears, which, from my wounded heart,
Bleed at my eyes——
Tor. Rise.
Qu. I will never rise;
I cannot choose a better place to die.
Tor. Oh, I would speak, but cannot.
Qu. [*Rising.*] Guilt keeps you silent then: you love me not.
What have I done? Ye powers, what have I done,
To see my youth, my beauty, and my love,
No sooner gained, but slighted and betrayed;
And, like a rose just gathered from the stalk,
But only smelt, and cheaply thrown aside,
To wither on the ground!
Ter. For Heaven's sake, madam, moderate your passion.
Qu. Why namest thou Heaven? There is no heaven for me;
Despair, death, hell, have seized my tortured soul,
When I had raised his grovelling fate from ground,
To power and love, to empire and to me;
When each embrace was dearer than the first;
Then, then to be contemned! Then, then thrown off!
It calls me old, and withered, and deformed,
And loathsome; Oh, what woman can be loathsome!
The turtle flies not from his billing mate;
He bills the closer; but ungrateful man,
Base, barbarous man, the more we raise our love,
The more we pall, and cool, and kill his ardour.
Racks, poisons, daggers, rid me of my life,
And any death is welcome!
Tor. Be witness, all ye powers, that know my heart,
I would have kept the fatal secret hid,
But she has conquered, to her ruin conquered.
Here, take this paper, read our destinies:
Yet do not; but, in kindness to yourself,
Be ignorantly safe.
Qu. No, give it me,
Even though it be the sentence of my death.
Tor. Then see how much unhappy love has made us.
Oh, Leonora! Oh!
We two were born when sullen planets reigned;
When each the other's influence opposed,
And drew the stars to factions at our birth.
Oh, better, better had it been for us,
That we had never seen, or never loved!
Qu. There is no faith in Heaven, if Heaven says so.
You dare not give it.
Tor. As unwillingly,
As I would reach out opium to a friend
Who lay in torture, and desired to die.
[*Gives the paper.*

But, now you have it, spare my sight the pain
Of seeing what a world of tears it cost you.
Go, silently enjoy your part of grief,
And share the sad inheritance with me.
Qu. I have a thirsty fever in my soul;
Give me but present ease, and let me die.
[*Exeunt Queen and* TERESA.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. Arm, arm, my lord; the city bands are up,
Drums beating, colours flying, shouts confused,
All clustering in a heap, like swarming hives,
And rising in a moment.
Tor. With design
To punish Bertran and revenge the king;
'Twas ordered so.
Lor. Then you're betrayed, my lord.
'Tis true, they block the castle kept by Bertran;
But now they cry, Down with the palace, fire it,
Pull out the usurping queen.
Tor. The queen, Lorenzo? Durst they name the queen?
Lor. If railing and reproaching be to name her.
Tor. Oh, sacrilege! Say, quickly, who commands
This vile blaspheming rout?
Lor. I'm loth to tell you;
But both our fathers thrust them headlong on,
And bear down all before them.
Tor. Death and hell!
Somewhat must be resolved, and speedily.
How sayest thou, my Lorenzo? Darest thou be
A friend, and once forget thou art a son,
To help me save the queen?
Lor. [*Aside.*] Let me consider——
Bear arms against my father! He begat me,
That's true; but for whose sake did he beget me?
For his own, sure enough; for me he knew not.
Oh, but, says Conscience, fly in Nature's face!
But how, if Nature fly in my face first?
Then Nature's the aggressor—Let her look to't—
He gave me life, and he may take it back——
No, that's boy's play, say I.
'Tis policy for son and father to take different sides;
For then lands and tenements commit no treason.
[*To* TOR.] Sir, upon mature consideration, I have found my father to be little better than a rebel; and therefore I'll do my best to secure him for your sake, in hope you may secure him hereafter for my sake.
Tor. Put on thy utmost speed to head the troops,
Which every moment I expect t' arrive.
Proclaim me, as I am, the lawful king.
I need not caution thee for Raymond's life,
Though I no more must call him father now.
Lor. [*Aside.*] How, not call him father! I see preferment alters a man strangely; this may serve me for a use of instruction, to cast off my father when I am great. Methought, too, he called himself the lawful king, intimating sweetly, that he knows what's what with our sovereign lady. Well, if I rout my father, as I hope in Heaven I shall, I am in a fair way to be a prince of the blood.—Farewell, general; I'll bring up those that shall try what mettle there is in orange-tawny. [*Exit.*
Tor. [*At the door.*] Haste there, command the guards be all drawn up
Before the palace gate. By Heaven, I'll face
This tempest, and deserve the name of king.
Oh, Leonora, beauteous in thy crimes,
Never were hell and heaven so matched before!
Look upward, fair, but as thou look'st on me;
Then all the blessed will beg that thou may'st live,
And even my father's ghost his death forgive.
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*The Palace-yard. Drums and trumpets within.*

Enter RAYMOND, ALPHONSO, PEDRO, *and their party.*

Ray. Now, valiant citizens, the time is come,
To shew your courage and your loyalty.
You have a prince of Sancho's royal blood,
The darling of the heavens, and joy of earth:
When he's produced, as soon he shall, among you,
Speak, what will you adventure to reseat him
Upon his father's throne?
Omnes. Our lives and fortunes.
Ray. What then remains to perfect our success,
But o'er the tyrant's guards to force our way?
Omnes. Lead on, lead on.
[*Drums and trumpets on the other side.*

Enter TORRISMOND *and his party. As they are going to fight, he speaks.*

Tor. [*To his.*] Hold, hold your arms.
Ray. Retire. What means this pause?
Ped. Peace; nature works within them.
[TOR. *and* RAY. *go apart.*
Tor. How comes it, good old man, that we two meet
On these harsh terms? Thou very reverend rebel,
Thou venerable traitor, in whose face
And hoary hairs treason is sanctified,
And sin's black dye seems blanched by age to virtue.
Ray. What treason is it to redeem my king,
And to reform the state?
Tor. That's a stale cheat;
The primitive rebel, Lucifer, first used it,
And was the first reformer of the skies.
Ray. What! if I see my prince mistake a poison,
Call it a cordial, am I then a traitor,
Because I hold his hand, or break the glass?
Tor. How darest thou serve thy king against his will?
Ray. Because 'tis then the only time to serve him.
Tor. I take the blame of all upon myself.
Discharge thy weight on me.
Ray. Oh, never, never!

Why, 'tis to leave a ship tossed in a tempest
Without the pilot's care.
Tor. I'll punish thee,
By Heaven, I will, as I would punish rebels,
Thou stubborn loyal man.
Ray. First let me see
Her punished, who misleads you from your fame;
Then burn me, hack me, hew me into pieces,
And I shall die well pleased.
Tor. Proclaim my title,
To save the effusion of my subjects' blood, and thou shalt still
Be as my foster-father, near my breast,
And next my Leonora.
Ray. That word stabs me;
You shall be still plain Torrismond with me,
The abettor, partner, (if you like that name)
The husband of a tyrant; but no king,
Till you deserve that title by your justice.
Tor. Then, farewell pity; I will be obeyed.
[*To the people.*] Hear, you mistaken men, whose loyalty
Runs headlong into treason, see your prince;
In me behold your murdered Sancho's son:
Dismiss your arms, and I forgive your crimes.
Ray. Believe him not; he raves: his words are loose
As heaps of sand, and scattering wide from sense.
You see he knows not me, his natural father!
But, aiming to possess the usurping queen,
So high he's mounted in his airy hopes,
That now the wind is got into his head,
And turns his brains to frenzy.
Tor. Hear me yet; I am—
Ray. Fall on, and hear him not;
But spare his person for his father's sake.
Ped. Let me come. If he be mad, I have that shall cure him; there's not a surgeon in all Arragon has so much dexterity as I have, at breathing of the temple-vein.
Tor. My right for me!
Ray. Our liberty for us!
Omnes. Liberty, liberty!
[*As they are ready to fight,*

Enter LORENZO *and his party.*

Lor. On forfeit of your lives, lay down your arms.
Alph. How, rebel! art thou there?
Lor. Take your rebel back again, father mine. The beaten party are rebels to the conquerors. I have been at hard-head with your butting citizens; I have routed your herd: I have dispersed them; and now they are retreated quietly from their extraordinary vocation of fighting in the streets, to their ordinary vocation of cozening in their shops.
Tor. [*To* RAY.] You see 'tis vain contending with the truth;
Acknowledge what I am.
Ray. You are my king; would you would be your own;
But, by a fatal fondness, you betray
Your fame and glory to the usurper's bed.
Enjoy the fruits of blood and parricide;
Take your own crown from Leonora's gift,
And hug your father's murderer in your arms.

Enter Queen, TERESA, *and Women.*

Alph. No more: behold the queen.
Ray. Behold the basilisk of Torrismond,
That kills him with her eyes. I will speak on.
My life is of no further use to me;
I would have chaffered it before for vengeance;
Now let it go for failing.
Tor. [*Aside.*] My heart sinks in me while I hear him speak,
And every slackened fibre drops its hold,
Like nature letting down the springs of life;
So much the name of father awes me still.
Send off the crowd. For you, now I have conquered,
I can hear with honour your demands.
Lor. [*To* ALPH.] Now, sir, who proves the traitor?
My conscience is true to me; it always whispers
Right when I have my regiment to back it.
[*Exeunt all but* TOR. RAY. *and Queen.*
Tor. Oh, Leonora! what can love do more?
I have opposed your ill fate to the utmost,
Combated heaven and earth to keep you mine;
And yet, at last, that tyrant, justice—Oh!—
Qu. 'Tis past, 'tis past, and love is ours no more.
Yet I complain not of the powers above;
They made me a miser's feast of happiness,
And could not furnish out another meal.
Now, by yon stars, by Heaven, and earth, and men;
By all my foes at once, I swear, my Torrismond,
That to have had you mine for one short day,
Has cancelled half my mighty sum of woes.
Say but you hate me not.
Tor. I cannot hate you.
Ray. Can you not? Say that once more,
That all the saints may witness it against you.
Qu. Cruel Raymond!
Can he not punish me, but he must hate?
Oh, 'tis not justice, but a brutal rage,
Which hates the offender's person with his crimes.
I have enough to overwhelm one woman,
To lose a crown and lover in a day.
Let pity lend a tear when rigour strikes.
Ray. Then, then you should have thought of tears and pity,
When virtue, majesty, and hoary age
Pleaded for Sancho's life.
Qu. My future days shall be one whole contrition;
A chapel will I build, with large endowment,
Where every day, an hundred aged men
Shall all hold up their withered hands to Heaven,
To pardon Sancho's death.
Tor. See, Raymond, see, she makes a large amends.
Sancho is dead; no punishment of her
Can raise his cold stiff limbs from the dark grave;
Nor can his blessed soul look down from Heaven,

Or break the eternal sabbath of his rest,
To see, with joy, her miseries on earth.
Ray. Heaven may forgive a crime to penitence;
For Heaven can judge if penitence be true;
But man, who knows not hearts, should make examples;
Which, like a warning-piece, must be shot off,
To fright the rest from crimes.
Qu. Had I but known that Sancho was his father,
I would have pour'd a deluge of my blood
To save one drop of his.
Tor. Mark that, inexorable Raymond, mark,
'Twas fatal ignorance that caused his death.
Ray. What if she did not know he was your father?
She knew he was a man, the best of men,
Heaven's image double-stamp'd, as man and king.
Qu. He was, he was, even more than you can say;
But yet——
Ray. But yet you barbarously murder'd him.
Qu. He will not hear me out!
Tor. Was ever criminal forbid to plead?
Curb your ill-manner'd zeal.
Ray. Sing to him, syren;
For I shall stop my ears. Now mince the sin,
And mollify damnation with a phrase:
Say, you consented not to Sancho's death,
But barely not forbade it.
Qu. Hard-hearted man! I yield my guilty cause;
But all my guilt was caused by too much love.
Had I for jealousy of empire sought
Good Sancho's death, Sancho had died before.
'Twas always in my power to take his life;
But interest never could my conscience blind,
Till love had cast a mist before my eyes,
And made me think his death the only means
Which could secure my throne to Torrismond.
Tor. Never was fatal mischief meant so kind;
For all she gave has taken all away.
Malicious powers! Is this to be restored?
'Tis to be worse deposed than Sancho was.
Ray. Heaven has restored you, you deposed yourself.
Oh, when young kings begin with scorn of justice,
They make an omen to their after-reign,
And plot their annals in the foremost page!
Tor. No more; lest you be made the first example,
To show how I can punish.
Ray. Once again,
Let her be made your father's sacrifice,
And after make me her's.
Tor. Condemn a wife!
Tht were t' atone for parricide with murder.
Ray. Then let her be divorced: we'll be content
With that poor scanty justice. Let her part.
Tor. Divorce! that's worse than death; 'tis, death of love.
Qu. The soul and body part not with such pain,
As I from you; but yet 'tis just, my lord:
I am the accurst of heaven, the hate of earth,
Your subjects' detestation, and your ruin;
And therefore fix this doom upon myself.
Tor. Heaven! can you wish it? to be mine no more?
Qu. Yes, I can wish it, as the dearest proof,
And last that I can make you of my love.
To leave you blest, I would be more accurst
Than death can make me; for death ends our woes,
And the kind grave shuts up the mournful scene:
But I would live without you, to be wretched long,
And hoard up every moment of my life,
To lengthen out the payment of my tears,
Till even fierce Raymond at the last shall say,
Now let her die, for she has grieved enough.
Tor. Hear this, hear this, thou tribune of the people;
Thou zealous, public blood-hound, hear, and melt.
Ray. [*Aside.*] I could cry now, my eyes grow womanish,
But yet my heart holds out.
Qu. Some solitary cloister will I choose,
And there with holy virgins live immured:
Coarse my attire, and short shall be my sleep,
Broke by the melancholy midnight-bell.
Now, Raymond, now be satisfied at last,
Fasting and tears, and penitence and prayer,
Shall do dead Sancho justice every hour.
Ray. [*Aside.*] By your leave, manhood! [*Wipes his eyes.*
Tor. He weeps; now he is vanquished.
Ray. No; 'tis a salt rheum that scalds my eyes.
Qu. If he were vanquished, I am still unconquer'd.
I'll leave you in the height of all my love,
Even when my heart is beating out its way,
And struggles to you most.
Farewell, a last farewell! my dear, dear lord,
Remember me; speak, Raymond, will you let him?
Shall he remember Leonora's love,
And shed a parting tear to her misfortunes?
Ray. [*Almost crying.*] Yes, yes, he shall; pray go.
Tor. Now, by my soul, she shall not go: why, Raymond,
Her every tear is worth a father's life.
Come to my arms; come, my fair penitent,
Let us not think what future ills may fall,
But drink deep draughts of love, and lose them all. [*Exit* TOR. *with the Queen.*
Ray. No matter yet, he has my hook within him.
Now let him frisk and flounce, and run and roll,
And think to break his hold: he toils in vain.
This love, the bait he gorged so greedily,
Will make him sick, and then I have him sure.

Enter ALPHONSO *and* PEDRO.

Alph. Brother, there's news from Bertran; he desires
Admittance to the king, and cries aloud,
This day shall end our fears of civil war;
For his safe conduct he entreats your presence,
And begs you would be speedy.

Ray. Though I loath
The traitor's sight, I'll go; attend us here.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter GOMEZ, ELVIRA, DOMINICK, *with Officers, to make the stage as full as possible.*

Ped. Why, how now, Gomez? what makest thou here with a whole brotherhood of city-bailiffs? Why, thou look'st like Adam in paradise, with his guard of beasts about him.

Gom. Ay, and a man had need of them, Don Pedro; for here are the two old seducers, a wife and a priest, that's Eve and the serpent, at my elbow.

Dom. Take notice how uncharitably he talks of churchmen.

Gom. Indeed you are a charitable belswagger: my wife cried out, fire, fire! and you brought out your church buckets, and called for engines to play against it.

Alph. I am sorry you are come hither to accuse your wife; her education has been virtuous, her nature mild and easy.

Gom. Yes; she's easy with a vengeance, there's a certain colonel has found her so.

Alph. She came a spotless virgin to your bed.

Gom. And she's a spotless virgin still for me—she's never the worse for my wearing, I'll take my oath on't: I have lived with her with all the innocence of a man of threescore; like a peaceable bed-fellow as I am.

Elv. Indeed, sir, I have no reason to complain of him for disturbing of my sleep.

Dom. A fine commendation you have given yourself; the church did not marry you for that.

Ped. Come, come, your grievances, your grievances.

Dom. Why, noble sir, I'll tell you.

Gom. Peace, friar! and let me speak first. I am the plaintiff. Sure you think you are in the pulpit, where you preach by hours.

Dom. And you edify by minutes.

Gom. Where you make doctrines for the people, and uses and applications for yourselves.

Ped. Gomez, give way to the old gentleman in black.

Gom. No, the t'other old gentleman in black shall take me if I do; I will speak first; nay, I will, friar, for all your *verbum sacerdotis*, I'll speak truth in few words, and then you may come afterwards, and lie by the clock, as you use to do: for, let me tell you, gentlemen, he shall lie and forswear himself with any friar in all Spain; that's a bold word now.

Dom. Let him alone; let him alone; I shall fetch him back with a *circum-bendibus*, I warrant him.

Alph. Well, what have you to say against your wife, Gomez?

Gom. Why, I say, in the first place, that I and all men are married for our sins, and that our wives are a judgment; that a bachelor-cobler is a happier man than a prince in wedlock; and that we are all visited with a household plague, and, Lord have mercy upon us, should be written on all our doors.

Dom. Now he reviles marriage, which is one of the seven blessed sacraments.

Gom. 'Tis liker one of the seven deadly sins but make your best on't, I care not; 'tis no binding a man neck and heels for all that! But as for my wife, that crocodile of Nilus, she has wickedly and traitorously conspired the cuckoldom of me, her anointed sovereign lord; and with the help of the aforesaid friar, whom Heaven confound, and with the limbs of one Colonel Hernando, cuckold-maker of this city, devilishly contrived to steal herself away, and, under her arm, feloniously to bear one casket of diamonds, pearls, and other jewels, to the value of thirty thousand pistoles. Guilty, or not guilty, how sayest thou, culprit?

Dom. False and scandalous! Give me the book. I'll take my corporal oath point-blank against every particular of this charge.

Elv. And so will I.

Dom. As I was walking in the streets, telling my beads, and praying to myself, according to my usual custom, I heard a foul outcry before Gomez's portal; and his wife, my penitent, making doleful lamentations; thereupon, making what haste my limbs would suffer me, that are crippled with often kneeling, I saw him spurning and fisting her most unmercifully! whereupon, using Christian arguments with him to desist, he fell violently upon me, without respect to my sacerdotal order, pushed me from him, and turned me about with a finger and a thumb, just as a man would set up a top. Mercy, quoth I. Damme, quoth he. And still continued labouring me, 'till a good-minded colonel came by, whom, as Heaven shall save me, I had never seen before!

Gom. Oh Lord! Oh Lord!

Dom. Ay, and, Oh, lady! Oh, lady, too! I redouble my oath, I had never seen him. Well, this noble colonel, like a true gentleman, was for taking the weaker part you may be sure—whereupon this Gomez flew upon him like a dragon, got him down, the devil being strong in him, and gave him bastinado upon bastinado, and buffet upon buffet, which the poor meek colonel, being prostrate, suffered with a most Christian patience.

Gom. Who? he meek? I'm sure I quake at the very thought of him; why, he's as fierce as Rhodomont; he made assault and battery upon my person, beat me into all the colours of the rainbow; and every word this abominable priest has uttered is as false as the Alcoran. But if you want a thorough-paced liar, that will swear through thick and thin, commend me to a friar.

Enter LORENZO, *who comes behind the company, and stands at his father's back unseen, over against* GOMEZ.

Lor. [*Aside.*] How now! what's here to do? My cause a-trying, as I live, and that before my own father: now fourscore take him for an old bawdy magistrate, that stands like the picture of Madam Justice, with a pair of scales in his hands, to weigh lechery by ounces.

Alph. Well—but all this while, who is this Colonel Hernando?

Gom. He's the first-begotten of Beelzebub, with a face as terrible as Demogorgon. [LOR. *peeps over* ALPHONSO'S *head, and stares at* GOMEZ.] No; I lie; I lie; he's a very proper handsome fellow; well-proportioned and clean-shaped, with a face like a cherubine.

Ped. What, backward and forward? Gomez, dost thou hunt counter?

Alph. Had this colonel any former design upon your wife? For, if that be proved, you shall have justice.

Gom. [*Aside.*] Now I dare speak, let him look as dreadful as he will. I say, sir, and will prove it, that he had a lewd design upon her body, and attempted to corrupt her honesty. [LOR. *peeps up, his fist clenched at him.*] I confess my wife was as willing—as himself; and, I believe, 'twas she corrupted him; for I have known him formerly, a very civil and modest person.

Elv. You see, sir, he contradicts himself at every word: he's plainly mad.

Alph. Speak boldly, man, and say what thou wilt stand by: Did he strike thee?

Gom. I will speak boldly: he struck me on the face before my own threshold, that the very walls cried shame on him. [LOR. *holds up again.*] 'Tis true, I gave him provocation, for the man's as peaceable a gentleman as any is in all Spain.

Dom. Now the truth comes out in spite of him.

Ped. I believe the friar has bewitched him.

Alph. For my part, I see no wrong that has been offered him.

Gon. How! no wrong? Why, he ravished me with the help of two soldiers, carried me away *vi et armis*, and would have put me into a plot against the government. [LOR. *holds up again.*] I confess, I never could endure the government, because it was tyrannical; but my sides and shoulders are black and blue, as I can strip and shew the marks of them. [LOR. *again.*] But that might happen too by a fall that I got yesterday upon the pebbles. [*All laugh.*

Dom. Fresh straw, and a dark chamber: a most manifest judgment; there never comes better of railing against the church.

Gom. Why, what will you have me say? I think you'll make me mad; truth has been at my tongue's end this half hour, and I have not power to bring it out, for fear of this bloody-minded colonel.

Alph. What colonel?

Gom. Why, my colonel; I mean, my wife's colonel, that appears there to me like my *malus genius*, and terrifies me.

Alph. [*Turning.*] Now you are mad, indeed, Gomez; this is my son Lorenzo.

Gom. How! your son Lorenzo! It is impossible.

Alph. As true as your wife, Elvira, is my daughter.

Lor. What, have I taken all this pains about a sister?

Gom. No, you have taken some about me: I am sure, if you are her brother, my sides can shew the tokens of our alliance.

Alph. [*To* LOR.] You know I put your sister into a nunnery, with a strict command not to see you, for fear you should have wrought upon her to have taken the habit, which was never my intention; and, consequently, I married her without your knowledge, that it might not be in your power to prevent it.

Elv. You see, brother, I had a natural affection to you.

Lor. What a delicious harlot have I lost! Now, pox upon me for being so near a-kin to thee.

Elv. However, we are both beholden to friar Dominick: the church is an indulgent mother, she never fails to do her part.

Dom. Heaven! what will become of me?

Gom. Why, you are not like to trouble heaven; those fat guts were never made for mounting.

Lor. I shall make bold to disburthen him of my hundred pistoles, to make him the lighter for his journey; indeed, 'tis partly out of conscience, that I may not be accessary to his breaking his vow of poverty.

Alph. I have no secular power to reward the pains you have taken with my daughter; but I shall do it by proxy, friar: your bishop's my friend, and is too honest to let such as you infect a cloister.

Gom. Ay, do, father-in-law, let him be stripped of his habit, and disordered—I would fain see him walk in querpo, like a cased rabbit, without his holy fur upon his back, that the world may once behold the inside of a friar.

Dom. Farewell, kind gentlemen: I give you all my blessing before I go.——May your sisters, wives, and daughters be so naturally lewd, that they may have no occasion for a devil to tempt, or a friar to pimp for them.

[*Exit, with a rabble pushing him.*

Enter TORRISMOND, LEONORA, BERTRAN, RAYMOND, TERESA, &c.

Tor. He lives! he lives! my royal father lives!
Let every one partake the general joy.
Some angel with a golden trumpet sound,
King Sancho lives! and let the echoing skies
From pole to pole resound, king Sancho lives!
Oh, Bertran, Oh, no more my foe, but brother:
One act like this blots out a thousand crimes.

Bert. Bad men, when 'tis their interest, may do good;

I must confess, I counselled Sancho's murder,
And urged the queen by specious arguments;
But, still suspecting that her love was changed,
I spread abroad the rumour of his death,
To sound the very soul of her designs:
The event, you know, was answering to my fears:
She threw the odium of the fact on me,
And publicly avowed her love to you.
Ray. Heaven guided all to save the innocent.
Bert. I plead no merit, but a bare forgiveness.
Tor. Not only that, but favour: Sancho's life,
Whether by virtue or design preserved,
Claims all within my power.
Qu. My prayers are heard!
And I have nothing farther to desire,
But Sancho's leave to authorize our marriage.
Tor. Oh, fear not him! pity and he are one.
So merciful a king did never live;
Loth to revenge, and easy to forgive:
But let the bold conspirator beware,
For Heaven makes princes its peculiar care.
[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

BY A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

THERE'S none, I'm sure, who is a friend to love,
But will our friar's character approve:
The ablest spark among you sometimes needs
Such pious help, for charitable deeds.
Our church, alas! (as Rome objects) does want
These ghostly comforts for the falling saint:
This gains them their whore-converts, and may be
One reason of the growth of popery.
So Mahomet's religion came in fashion
By the large leave it gave to fornication.
Fear not the guilt, if you can pay for't well;
There is no Dives in the Roman hell.
Gold opens the strait gate, and lets him in;
But want of money is a mortal sin.
For all besides you may discount to heaven,
And drop a bead to keep the tallies even.
How are men cozen'd still with shows of good!
The bawd's best mask is the grave friar's hood.
Though vice no more a clergyman displeases,
Than doctors can be thought to hate diseases.
'Tis by your living ill, that they live well;
By your debauches their fat paunches swell.
'Tis a mock war between the priest and devil:
When they think fit, they can be very civil.
As some, who did French counsels most advance
To blind the world, have rail'd in print at France.
Thus do the clergy at your vices bawl,
That with more ease they may engross them all:
By damning yours, they do their own maintain:
A churchman's godliness is always gain.
Hence to their prince they will superior be;
And civil treason grows church loyalty.
They boast the gift of heaven is in their power.
Well may they give the god they can devour.
Still to the sick and dead their claims they lay:
For 'tis on carrion that the vermin prey.
Nor have they less dominion on our life,
They trot the husband, and they pace the wife.
Rouse up, you cuckolds of the northern clime,
And learn from Sweden to prevent such crimes.
Unman the friar, and leave the holy drone
To hum in his forsaken hive alone:
He'll work no honey when his sting is gone.
Your wives and daughters soon will leave the cell,
When they have lost the sound of Aaron's bell.

LOVE MAKES A MAN.

BY

CIBBER.

PROLOGUE.

SINCE plays are but a kind of public feasts
Where tickets only make the welcome guests;
Methinks, instead of grace, we should prepare
Your tastes in prologues, with your bill of fare.
When you foreknow each course, tho' this may teize you,
'Tis five to one, but each o' th' five may please you.
First, for your critics, we've your darling cheer,
Faults without number, more than sense can bear;
You're certain to be pleased where errors are.
From your displeasure I dare vouch we're safe,
You never frown, but where your neighbours laugh.
Now you that never know what spleen or hate is,
Who, for an act or two, are welcome *gratis*,
That tip the wink, and so sneak out with *numquam satis*:
For your smart tastes, we've toss'd you up a fop,
We hope the newest that's of late come up;
The fool, beau, wit, and rake, so mixed he carries,
He seems a ragout, piping-hot from Paris.
But for the softer sex, whom most we'd move,
We've what the fair and chaste were formed for—love;
An artless passion fraught with hopes and fears,
And nearest happy, when it most despairs.
For masks we've scandal: and for beaux, French airs.
To please all tastes, we'll do the best we can;
For the galleries, we've Dicky and Will Penkethman. *
Now, sirs, you're welcome, and you know your fare:
But pray, in charity, the founder spare,
Lest you destroy, at once, the poet and the player.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

ANTONIO, } *old Gentlemen.*
CHARINO, }
Don LEWIS, *Uncle and near Friend to Carlos.*
CARLOS, *a Student, Son to Antonio.*
CLODIO, *a pert Coxcomb, his Brother.*
SANCHO, *Servant to Carlos.*
MONSIEUR, *Valet to Clodio.*
Governor of Lisbon.
Don DUART, *his Nephew.*
Don MANUEL, *a Sea Officer, in love with Louisa.*

WOMEN.

ANGELINA, *Daughter to Charino.*
LOUISA, *a Lady of quality and pleasure.*
ELVIRA, *Sister to Don Duart.*
HONORIA, *Cousin to Louisa.*

Priests, Officers, and Servants.

SCENE,—*Lisbon.*

* Two comic actors who lived at the time this play was written.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Hall.*

Enter ANTONIO *and* CHARINO.

Ant. Without compliment, my old friend, I shall think myself much honoured in your alliance; our families are both ancient; our children young, and able to support them; and, I think, the sooner we set them to work the better.

Cha. Sir, you offer fair and nobly, and shall find I dare meet you in the same line of honour: and, I hope, since I have but one girl in the world, you won't think me a troublesome old fool, if I endeavour to bestow her to her worth; therefore, if you please, before we shake hands, a word or two by the by; for I have some considerable questions to ask you.

Ant. Ask them.

Cha. Well, in the first place, you say you have two sons?

Ant. Exactly.

Cha. And you are willing that one of them shall marry my daughter?

Ant. Willing.

Cha. My daughter Angelina?

Ant. Angelina.

Cha. And you are likewise content that the said Angelina shall survey them both, and (with my allowance) take to her lawful husband which of them she pleases?

Ant. Content.

Cha. And you farther promise, that the person by her (and me) so chosen (be it elder or younger) shall be your sole heir; that is to say, shall be in a conditional possession of at least three parts of your estate. You know the conditions, and this you positively promise?

Ant. To perform.

Cha. Why, then, as the last token of my full consent and approbation, I give you my hand.

Ant. There's mine.

Cha. Is't a match?

Ant. A match.

Cha. Done.

Ant. Done.

Cha. And done——that's enough——Carlos, the elder, you say, is a great scholar, spends his whole life in the university, and loves his study?

Ant. Nothing more, sir.

Cha. But Clodio, the younger, has seen the world, and is very well known in the court of France; a sprightly fellow, ha?

Ant. Mettle to the back, sir.

Cha. Well, how far either of them may go with my daughter, I cann't tell; she'll be easily pleased where I am——I have given her some documents already. Hark! what noise without?

Ant. Odso! 'Tis they——they're come——I have expected them these two hours. Well, sirrah, who's without?

Enter a Servant.

Ser. 'Tis Sancho, sir, with a waggon-load of my master's books.

Cha. What, does he always travel with his whole study?

Ant. Never without them, sir; 'tis his library.

Enter SANCHO, *laden with books.*

San. Pedro, unload part of the library; bid the porter open the great gates, and make room for t'other dozen of carts; I'll be with you presently.

Ant. Ha! Sancho! where's my Carlos? Speak, boy, where didst thou leave thy master?

San. Jogging on, sir, in the highway to knowledge, both hands employed in his book and his bridle, sir; but he has sent his duty before in this letter, sir.

Ant. What have we here, pothooks and hangers irons?

San. Pothooks! Oh, dear sir!——I beg your pardon——No, sir, this is Arabic; 'tis to the Lord Abbot, concerning the translation, &c. of human bodies——a new way of getting out of the world——There's a terrible wise man he has written a very smart book of it.

Cha. Pray, friend, what will that same book teach a man?

San. Teach you, sir! Why, to play a trump upon death, and shew yourself a match for the devil.

Cha. Strange!

San. Here, sir, this is your letter. [*To Ant.*

Cha. Pray, sir, what sort of life may your master lead?

San. Life, sir! No prince fares like him; he breaks his fast with Aristotle, dines with Tully, drinks tea at Helicon, sups with Seneca, then walks a turn or two in the milky-way, and, after six hours conference with the stars, sleeps with old Erra Pater.

Cha. Wonderful!

Ant. So, Carlos will be here presently—Here, take the knave in, and let him eat.

San. And drink too, sir?

Ant. And drink too, sir—and pray see your master's chamber ready. [*Knocking again.*]—Well, sir, who's at the gate?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Monsieur, sir, from my young master Clodio.

Enter MONSIEUR.

Ant. Well, Monsieur, what says your master? When will he be here?

Mons. Sire, he vill be here in de less time den von quarter of de hour; he is not quite two mile off.

Ant. And what came you before for?

Mons. Sire, me come to provide de pulville, and de essence for his peruque, dat he may approche to your vorshipe vid de reverence and de belle air.

Ant. What, is he unprovided, then?

Mons. Sire, he vas enragé, and did break his bottel d'orangerie, because it vas not de same dat is prepare for Monseigneur le Dauphin.

Ant. Well, sir, if you'll go to the butler, he'll help you to some oil for his periwig.

Mons. Sire, me tank you. [*Exit* MONS.

Cha. A very notable spark, this Clodio. Ha! what noise is that without?

Enter a Servant.

Ser. Sir, my young masters are both come.

Ant. That's well! Now, sir, now! now observe their several dispositions.

Enter CARLOS.

Car. My father! sir, your blessing.

Ant. Thou hast it, Carlos; and now, pray know this gentleman, Charino, sir, my old friend, and one in whom you may have a particular interest.

Car. I'll study to deserve his love, sir.

Cha. Sir, as for that matter, you need not study at all. [*They salute.*

Clo. [*Within.*] Hey! La Valiere! bid the groom take care our hunters be well rubbed and clothed; they're hot, and have outstripped the wind.

Cha. Ay, marry, sir, there's mettle in this young fellow.

Enter CLODIO.

Clo. Where's my father?

Ant. Ha, my dear Clody, thou'rt welcome!

Clo. Sir, being my father's friend, I am your most obliged, faithful, humble servant. [*To* CHA.

Cha. Sir——I—I—I like you. [*Eagerly.*

Clo. Thy hand.

Cha. Faith, thou art a pretty-humoured fellow.

Clo. Who's that? Pray, sir, who's that?

Ant. Your brother, Clody.

Clo. Odso! I beg his pardon with all my heart—Ha, ha, ha! Did ever mortal see such a bookworm!—Brother, how is't? [*Carelessly.*

Car. I'm glad you are well, brother. [*Reads.*

Clo. What, does he draw his book upon me? Then I will draw my wit upon him——Gad, I'll puzzle him—Hark you, brother; pray, what's—latin for a sword-knot?

Car. The Romans wore none, brother.

Clo. No ornament upon their swords, sir?

Car. Oh, yes, several: conquest, peace, and honour—an old unfashionable wear.

Clo. Sir, no man in France (I may as well say breathing; for not to live there, is not to breathe) wears a more fashionable sword than I do; he cost me fifteen louis d'ors in Paris——There, sir,—feel him—try him, sir.

Car. I have no skill, sir.

Clo. No skill, sir! Why, this sword would make a coward fight—Aha! sa, sa! ha! rip—ha! there I had him. [*Fencing.*

Car. Take heed; you'll cut my clothes, brother.

Clo. Cut 'em! Ha, ha!—no, no, they are cut already, brother, to the grammar rules exactly. Psha! pr'ythee, man, leave off this college-air.

Car. No, brother, I think it wholesome; the soil and situation pleasant.

Clo. A put, by Jupiter! He don't know the air of a gentleman from the air of the country—Sir, I mean the air of your clothes; I would have you change your tailor, and dress a little more en cavalier: lay by your book, and take out your snuff-box; cock, and look smart, ha!

Cha. Faith, a pretty fellow.

Car. I read no use in this, brother; and for my clothes, the half of what I wear already seems to me superfluous. What need I outward ornaments, when I can deck myself with understanding? Why should we care for any thing but knowledge? Or look upon the follies of mankind, but to condemn or pity those that seek them? [*Reads again.*

Clo. Stark mad, split me!

Cha. Psha! this fellow will never do——he has no soul in him.

Clo. Hark you, brother, what do you think of a pretty, plump wench now?

Car. I seldom think that way: women are books I have not read yet.

Clo. Gad, I could set you a sweet lesson, brother.

Car. I am as well here, sir. [*Reads.*

Cha. Good for no earthly thing—a stock—Ah, that Clody!

Enter MONSIEUR.

Mons. Sire, here be de several sort of de jessamine d'orangerie vidout, if you please to make your choice.

Clo. Mum.—Sir, I must beg pardon for a moment; a most important business calls me aside, which I will dispatch with all imaginable celerity, and return to the repetition of my desire to continue, sir, your most obliged, and faithful humble servant. [*Exit* CLO. *bowing.*

Cha. Faith, he's a pretty fellow.

Ant. Now, sir, if you please, since we have got the other alone, we'll put the matter a little closer to him.

Cha. 'Tis to little purpose, I'm afraid: but use your pleasure, sir.

Car. Plato differs from Socrates in this. [*To himself.*

Ant. Come, come, pr'ythee, Charles, lay them by, let them agree at leisure——What, no hour of interruption?

Car. Man's life, sir, being so short, and then the way that leads us to the knowledge of ourselves so hard and tedious, each minute should be precious.

Ant. Ay, but to thrive in this world, Charles, you must part a little with this bookish contemplation, and prepare yourself for action. If you will study, let it be to know what part of my

land's fit for the plough; what for pasture; to buy and sell my stock to the best advantage; and cure my cattle when they are overgrown with labour. This, now, would turn to some account.

Car. This, sir, may be done from what I've read; for, what concerns tillage, who can better deliver it than Virgil in his Georgics? And, for the cure of herds, his Bucolics are a masterpiece; but when his art describes the commonwealth of bees, their industry, their more than human knowledge of the herbs from which they gather honey; their laws, their government among themselves, their order in going forth, and coming laden home, their strict obedience to their king, his just rewards to such as labour, his punishment, inflicted only on the slothful drone; I'm ravished with it: then reap, indeed, my harvest, receive the grain my cattle bring me, and there find wax and honey.

Ant. Hey-day! Georges, and Blue-sticks, and bees-wax! What, art thou mad?

Cha. Raving, raving!

Car. No, sir, the knowledge of this guards me from it.

Ant. But can you find, amongst all your musty manuscripts, what pleasure he enjoys, that lies in the arms of a young, rich, well-shaped, healthy bride? Answer me that, ha, sir!

Car. 'Tis frequent, sir, in story; there I read of all kinds of virtuous and of vicious women; the ancient Spartan dames, the Roman ladies, their beauties, their deformities; and when I light upon a Portia, or a Cornelia, crowned with ever-blooming truth and virtue, with such a feeling I peruse their fortunes, as if I then had lived, and tasted of their lawful, envied love. But when I meet a Messalina, tired and unsated in her foul desires; a Clytemnestra, bathed in her husband's blood; an impious Tullia, whirling her chariot over her father's breathless body, horror invades my faculties. Comparing, then, the numerous guilty, with the easy count of those that die in innocence, I detest and loath them as ignorance, or atheism.

Ant. And you do resolve, then, not to make payment of the debt you owe me?

Car. What debt, good sir?

Ant. Why, the debt I paid my father, when I got you, sir, and made him a grandsire; which I expect from you. I won't have my name die.

Car. Nor would I; my laboured studies, sir, may prove in time a living issue.

Ant. Very well, sir: and so I shall have a general collection of all the quiddits, from Adam till this time, to be my grandchild.

Car. I'll take my best care, sir, that what I leave, mayn't shame the family.

Cha. A sad fellow, this! this is a very sad fellow! [*Aside.*

Ant. So, in short, you would not marry an empress?

Car. Give me leave to enjoy myself. The closet, that contains my chosen books, to me's a glorious court; my venerable companions there, the old sages and philosophers, sometimes the greatest kings and heroes, whose counsels I have leave to weigh, and call their victories, if unjustly got, unto a strict account, and, in my fancy dare deface their ill-placed statues. Can I then part with solid, constant pleasures, to clasp uncertain vanities? No, sir, be it your care to swell your heap of wealth: marry my brother, and let him get you bodies of your name; I rather would inform it with a soul. I tire you—your pardon and your leave. Lights there for my study. [*Exit* CARL.

Ant. Was ever man thus transported from the common sense of his own happiness! a stupid wise rogue! I could beat him. Now, if were not for my hopes in young Clody, I must fairly conclude my name were at a period.

Cha. Ay, ay, he's the match for my mother, and my girl's too, I warrant her. What say you, sir, shall we tell them a piece of our mind, and turn them together instantly?

Ant. This minute, sir; and here comes my young rogue, in the very nick of his fortune.

Enter CLODIO.

Clody, a word——

Clo. To the wise is enough. Your pleasure, sir?

Ant. In the mean time, sir, if you please to send your daughter notice of our intended visit. [*To* CHARLES.

Cha. I'll do it—hark you, friend— [*Whispers a servant.*

Enter SANCHO *behind.*

San. I doubt my master has found but rough welcome; he's gone supperless into his study. I'd fain know the reason—it may be, somebody has borrowed one of his books, or so—I must find it out. [*Stands aside.*

Clo. Sir, you could not have started any thing more agreeable to my inclination; and for the young lady's, sir, if this old gentleman will please to give me a sight of her, you shall see me win into her's, in the cutting of a caper.

Cha. Well, pursue and conquer; though, let me tell you, sir, my girl has wit, and will give you as good as you bring; she has a smart wit, sir.

Clo. Sir, I will be as smart as she; I have a share of courage; I fear no woman alive, sir, having always found that love and assurance ought to be as inseparable companions as a beau and a snuff-box, or a curate and a tobacco-stopper.

Cha. Faith, thou art a pleasant rogue! 'Egad she must like thee.

Clo. I know how to tickle the ladies, sir—at Paris, I had constantly two challenges every morning came up with my chocolate, only for being pleasant company the night before with the first ladies of quality.

Cha. Ah, silly envious rogues! Pr'ythee, what do you do to the ladies?

San. Positively, nothing. [*Asi*

Clo. Why, the truth is, I did make the jades drink a little too smartly; for which the poor dogs, the princes, could not endure me.

Cha. Why, hast thou really conversed with the royal family?

Clo. Conversed with them! ay, rot them! ay, ay—You must know, some of them came with me half a day's journey, to see me a little on my way hither: but 'egad, I sent young Louis back again to Marli, as drunk as a tinker, by Jove! Ha, ha, ha! I cann't but laugh to think how old Monarchy growled at him next morning.

Cha. Gad-a-mercy, boy! Well, and I warrant thou wert as intimate with their ladies, too?

San. Just alike, I dare answer for him. [*Aside.*

Clo. Why, you shall judge now, you shall judge—let me see—there was I and Monsieur—no, no, no! Monsieur did not sup with us—there was I and prince Grandmont, Duke de Bongrace—duke De Bellegrade—(Bellegrade—yes—yes—Jack was there) Count de l'Esprit, Marshal Bombard, and that pleasant dog, the Prince de Hautenbas. We six, now, were all at supper, all in good humour; champaigne was the word, and wit flew about the room like a pack of losing cards—now, sir, in madame's adjacent lodgings, there happened to be the self-same number of ladies, after the fatigue of a ballet, diverting themselves with ratifia and the spleen; so dull, they were not able to talk, though it were scandalously, even of their best friends. So, sir, after a profound silence, at last one of them gaped—Oh, gad! says she, would that pleasant dog, Clody, were here, to badiner a little! hey! says a second, and stretched—Ah, mon dieu! says a third, and waked—Could not one find him? says a fourth, and leered—Oh, burn him, says a fifth, I saw him go out with the nasty rakes of the blood again—in a pet—did you so? says a sixth. Pardie! we'll spoil that gang presently—in a passion. Whereupon, sir, in two minutes, I received a billet in four words—'Chien, nous vous demandons;' subscribed, Grandmont, Bongrace, Bellegrade, L'Esprit, Bombard, and Hautenbas.

Cha. Why, these are the very names of the princes you supped with.

Clo. Every soul of them the individual wife or sister of every man in the company, split me! ha, ha, ha!

Cha. & Ant. Ha, ha!

San. Did ever two old gudgeons swallow so greedily! [*Aside.*

Ant. Well, and didst thou make a night on't, boy?

Clo. Yes, 'egad, and morning too, sir; for about eight o'clock the next day, slap they all soused upon their knees, kissed round, burned their commodes, drank my health, broke their glasses, and so parted.

Ant. Gad-a-mercy, Clody! Nay, 'twas always a wild young rogue!

Cha. I like him the better for't—he's a pleasant one, I'm sure.

Ant. Well, the rogue gives him a rare account of his travels.

Clo. 'Egad, sir, I have a cure for the spleen. Ah, ha! I know how to wriggle myself into a lady's favour——give me leave when you please, sir.

Cha. Sir, you shall have it this moment—faith, I like him—you remember the conditions, sir, three parts of your estate to him and his heirs?

Ant. Sir, he deserves it all; 'tis not a trifle shall part them. You see Charles has given over the world: I'll undertake to buy his birth-right for a shelf of new books.

Cha. Ay, ay; get you the writings ready, with your other son's hand to them; for, unless he signs, the conveyance is of no validity.

Ant. I know it, sir—they shall be ready with his hand in two hours.

Cha. Why, then, come along, my lad; and now I'll show thee to my daughter.

Clo. I dare be shown, sir—Allons! Hey, suivons l'amour. [*Exeunt all but* SANCHO.

San. How! my poor master to be disinherited, for monsieur Sa-sa, there, and I a looker-on too! If we have studied our majors and our minors, our antecedents and consequents, to be concluded coxcombs at last, we have made a fair hand on't. I'm glad I know of this roguery, however. I'll take care my master's uncle, old Don Lewis, shall hear of it; for, though he can hardly read a proclamation, yet he dotes upon his learning; and if he be that old, rough, testy blade he used to be, we may chance to have a rubber with them first—here he comes, *profecto.*

Enter Don LEWIS.

D. Lew. Sancho, where's my boy Charles? What, is he at it? Is he at it? Deep—deep—I warrant him—Sancho—a little peep now—one peep at him, through the key-hole—I must have a peep.

San. Have a care, sir, he's upon a magical point.

D. Lew. What, has he lost any thing?

San. Yes, sir, he has lost, with a vengeance.

D. Lew. But what, what, what, what, sirrah! what is't?

San. Why, his birth-right, sir; he is di—di—dis—disinherited. [*Sobbing.*

D. Lew. Ha! how! when! what! where! who! what dost thou mean?

San. His brother, sir, is to marry Angelina, the great heiress, to enjoy three parts of his father's estate; and my master is to have a whole acre of new books, for setting his hand to the conveyance.

D. Lew. This must be a lie, sirrah; I will have it a lie.

San. With all my heart, sir; but here comes my old master, and the pick-pocket the lawyer: they'll tell you more.

Enter ANTONIO *and a Lawyer.*

Ant. Here, sir, this paper has your full instructions: pray, be speedy, sir; I don't know

but we may couple them to-morrow; be sure you make it firm.

Law. Do you secure his hand, sir, I defy the law to give him his title again. [*Exit Lawyer.*

San. What think you now, sir?

D. Lew. Why, now, methinks, I'm pleased—this is right—I'm pleased—must cut that lawyer's throat though—must bone him—ay, I'll have him boned—and potted.

Ant. Brother, how is it?

D. Lew. Oh, mighty well—mighty well—let's feel your pulse—feverish——

[*Looks earnestly in* ANTONIO'S *face, and, after some pause, whistles a piece of a tune.*

Ant. You are merry, brother.

D. Lew. It's a lie.

Ant. How, brother!

D. Lew. A damned lie—I am not merry. [*Smiling.*

Ant. What are you, then?

D. Lew. Very angry.

Ant. Hi, hi, hi! At what, brother? [*Mimicking him.*

D. Lew. Why, at a very wise settlement I have made lately.

Ant. What settlement, good brother? I find he has heard of it. [*Aside.*

D. Lew. What do you think I have done? I have—this deep head of mine has—disinherited my elder son, because his understanding is an honour to my family, and given it all to my younger, because he's a puppy—a puppy.

Ant. Come, I guess at your meaning, brother.

D. Lew. Do you so, sir? Why, then, I must tell you, flat and plain, my boy Charles must and shall inherit it.

Ant. I say no, unless Charles had a soul to value his fortune. What! he should manage eight thousand crowns a year out of the metaphysics? astronomy should look to my vineyards; Horace should buy off my wines; tragedy should kill my mutton; history should cut down my hay; Homer should get in my corn; *Tityre tu patulæ* look to my sheep; and geometry bring my harvest home! Hark you, brother, do you know what learning is?

D. Lew. What if I don't, sir? I believe it's a fine thing, and that's enough—though I can speak no Greek, I love and honour the sound of it, and Charles speaks it loftily; 'egad, he thunders it out, sir: and, let me tell you, sir, if you had ever the grace to have heard but six lines of Hesiod, or Homer, or Iliad, or any of the Greek poets, od's-heart! would have made your hair stand on end; sir, he has read such things in my hearing——

Ant. But did you understand them, brother?

D. Lew. I tell you, no. What does that signify! The very sound's sufficient comfort to an honest man.

Ant. Fie, fie! I wonder you talk so, you that are old, and should understand.

D. Lew. Should, sir! Yes, and do, sir. Sir, I'd have you to know I have studied, I have run over history, poetry, philosophy.

Ant. Yes, like a cat over a harpsichord, for music——You have read catalogues, I believe. Come, come, brother, my younger boy is a fine gentleman.

D. Lew. A sad dog—I'll buy a prettier fellow in a pennyworth of gingerbread.

Ant. What I propose, I'll do, sir, say you your pleasure—Here comes one I must talk with—Well, brother, what news?

Enter CHARINO.

Cha. Oh, to our wishes, sir! Clody's a right bait for a girl, sir; a budding sprightly fellow: she's a little shy at first; but I gave him his cue, and the rogue does so whisk, and frisk, and sir, and dance her about! Odsbud, he plays like a greyhound. Noble Don Lewis, I am your humble servant. Come, what say you? Shall I prevail with you to settle some part of your estate upon young Clody?

D. Lew. Clody!

Cha. Ay, your nephew, Clody.

D. Lew. Settle upon him!

Cha. Ay.

D. Lew. Why, look you, I ha'n't much land to spare; but I have an admirable horse-pond—I'll settle that upon him, if you will.

Ant. Come, let him have his way, sir; he's old and hasty; my estate's sufficient. How does your daughter, sir?

Cha. Ripe and ready, sir, like a blushing rose: she only waits for the pulling.

Ant. Why, then, let to-morrow be the day.

Cha. With all my heart; get you the writings ready, my girl shall be here in the morning.

D. Lew. Hark you, sir, do you suppose my Charles shall——

Cha. Sir, I suppose nothing; what I'll do, I'll justify; what your brother does, let him answer.

Ant. That I have already, sir, and so good morrow to your patience, brother. [*Exit* ANTONIO.

D. Lew. Sancho!

San. Sir?

D. Lew. Fetch me some gunpowder—quick—quick.

San. Sir?

D. Lew. Some gunpowder, I say—a barrel—quickly—and, d'ye hear, three pennyworth of ratsbane; hey! ay, I'll blow up one, and poison the other.

San. Come, sir, I see what you would be at; and if you dare take my advice, (I don't want wit at a pinch, sir,) e'en let me try, if I can fire my master enough with the praises of the young lady, to make him rival his brother; that would blow them up, indeed, sir.

D. Lew. Psha! impossible; he never spoke six words to any woman in his life, but his bootmaker.

San. So much the better, sir; therefore, if he speaks at all, it's the more likely to be out of the road. Hark, he rings!—I must wait upon him. [*Exit* SANCHO.

D. Lew. These damned old rogues! I can't

look my poor boy in the face: but come, Charles; let them go on; thou shalt not want money to buy thee books yet—that old fool, thy father, and his young puppy, shall not share a groat of mine between them; nay, to plague them, I could find in my heart to fall sick in a pet, give thee my estate in a passion, and leave the world in a fury. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter ANTONIO *and* SANCHO.

Ant. Sir, he shall have what's fit for him.

San. No inheritance, sir?

Ant. Enough to give him books, and a moderate maintenance; that's as much as he cares for; you talk like a fool, a coxcomb; trouble him with land—

San. Must master Clodio have all, sir?

Ant. All, all; he knows how to use it; he's a man bred in this world; t'other in the skies, his business is altogether above stairs; [*Bell rings.*] go, see what he wants.

San. A father, I'm sure. [*Exit* SANCHO.

Ant. What, will none of my rogues come near me now? Oh here they are.

Enter three Servants.

Well, sir, in the first place, can you procure me a plentiful dinner for about fifty, within two hours? Your young master is to be married this morning; will that spur you, sir?

Cook. Young master, sir! I wish your honour had given me a little more warning.

Ant. Sir, you have as much as I had; I was not sure of it half an hour ago.

Cook. Sir, I will try what I can do—Hey, Pedro! Gusman! Come, stir, ho! [*Exit Cook.*

Ant. Butler, open the cellar to all good fellows; if any man offers to sneak away sober, knock him down! [*Exeunt.*

CARLOS *alone in his study. A Noise of chopping within.*

Car. What a perpetual noise these people make! my head is broken with several noises, and in every corner. I have forgot to eat and sleep with reading; all my faculties turn into study. What a misfortune 'tis in human nature, that the body will not live on that which feeds the mind! How unprofitable a pleasure is eating!——Sancho!

Enter SANCHO.

San. Did you call, sir? [*Chopping again.*

Car. Pr'ythee, what noise is this?

San. The cooks are hard at work, sir, chopping herbs, and mincing meat, and breaking marrow-bones.

Car. And is it thus at every dinner?

San. No, sir; but we have high doings today.

Car. Well, set this folio in its place again; then make me a little fire, and get a manchet; I'll dine alone—Does my younger brother speak any Greek yet, Sancho?

San. No, sir, but he spits French like a magpie, and that's more in fashion.

Car. He steps before me there; I think I read it well enough to understand it; but, when I am to give it utterance, it quarrels with my tongue. Again that noise! Pr'ythee tell me, Sancho, are there any princes to dine here?

San. Some there are as happy as princes, sir; your brother's married to-day.

Car. What of that? might not six dishes serve them? I never have but one, and eat of that but sparingly.

San. Sir, all the country round is invited; not a dog that knows the house but comes too: all open, sir.

Car. Pr'ythee, who is it my brother marries?

San. Old Charino's daughter, sir, the great heiress; a delicate creature; young, soft, smooth, fair, plump, and ripe as a cherry—and, they say, modest too.

Car. That's strange; pr'ythee, how do these modest women look? I never yet conversed with any but my own mother; to me, they ever were but shadows, seen and unregarded.

San. Ah, would you saw this lady, sir! she would draw you farther than your Archimedes; she has a better secret than any's in Aristotle, if you studied for it. 'Egad, you'd find her the prettiest natural philosopher to play with!

Car. Is she so fine a creature?

San. Such eyes! such looks! such a pair of pretty, plump, pouting lips! such softness in her voice! such music, too! and, when she smiles, such roguish dimples in her cheeks! such a clear skin! white neck, and, a little lower, such a pair of round, hard, heaving, what d'ye-call-ums—ah!

Car. Why, thou art in love, Sancho.

San. Ay, so would you be, if you saw her, sir.

Car. I don't think so. What settlement does my father make them?

San. Only all his dirty land, sir, and makes your brother his sole heir.

Car. Must I have nothing?

San. Books in abundance; leave to study your eyes out, sir.

Car. I'm the elder born, and have a title though.

San. No matter for that, sir, he'll have possession—of the lady, too!

Car. I wish him happy—he'll not inherit my little understanding, too!

San. Oh, sir, he's more a gentleman than to

do that—Ods me, sir! sir, here comes the very lady, the bride, your sister that must be, and her father.

Enter CHARINO *and* ANGELINA.

Stand close; you'll both see and hear, sir.

Car. I ne'er saw any yet so fair; such sweetness in her looks! such modesty! If we may think the eye the window to the heart, she has a thousand treasured virtues there.

San. So! the book is gone. [*Aside.*

Cha. Come, pr'ythee, put on a brisker look; ods-heart, dost thou think in conscience, that's fit for thy wedding-day?

Ang. Sir, I wish it were not quite so sudden; a little time for farther thought, perhaps, had made it easier to me: to change for ever, is no trifle, sir.

Car. A wonder!

Cha. Look you, his fortune I have taken care of, and his person you have no exceptions to.—What, in the name of Venus, would the girl have?

Ang. I never said, of all the world I made him, sir, my choice: nay, though he be yours, I cannot say I am highly pleased with him, nor yet am averse; but I had rather welcome your commands and him, than disobedience.

Cha. Oh, if that be all, madam, to make you easy, my commands are at your service.

Ang. I have done with my objections, sir.

Car. Such understanding in so soft a form! Happy—happy brother! may he be happy, while I sit down in patience and alone! I have gazed too much—Reach me an Ovid.

[*Exeunt* CARLOS *and* SANCHO.

Cha. I say put on your best looks, hussy—for here he comes, faith.

Enter CLODIO.

Ah, my dear Clody!

Clo. My dear, [*Kisses him.*] dear dad. Ha! *Ma princesse! estes vous là donc?* Ah, ha! *Non, non, Je ne m'y connois guères,* &c. [*Sings.*] Look, look—look, o'slyboots; what, she knows nothing of the matter! But you will, child—E'gad, I shall count the clock extremely to-night. Let me see—what time shall I rise to-morrow? Not till after nine, ten, eleven, for a pistole.—Ah—*C'est à dire, votre cœur insensible est enfin vaincu. Non, non,* &c. [*Sings a second verse.*

Enter ANTONIO, *Don* LEWIS, *and Lawyer.*

Ant. Well said, Clody! my noble brother, welcome! my fair daughter, I give you joy!

Clo. And so will I, too, sir. *Allons! Vivons! Chantons, dansons! Hey! L'autre jour,* &c. [*Sings and dances,* &c.

Ant. Well said again, boy. Sir, you and your writings are welcome. What, my angry brother! nay, you must have your welcome, too, or we shall make but a flat feast of it.

D. Lew. Sir, I am not welcome, nor I won't be welcome, nor nobody's welcome, and you are all a parcel of——

Cha. What, sir?

D. Lew.——Miserable wretches—mad dogs.

Ant. Come, pray, sir, bear with him, he's old and hasty: but he'll dine and be good company for all this.

D. Lew. A strange lie that.

Cla. Ha, ha, ha! poor Testy, ha, ha!

D. Lew. Don't laugh, my dear rogue, pr'ythee, don't laugh now; faith, I shall break thy head, if thou dost.

Clo. Gad so! why, then, I find you are angry at me, dear uncle!

D. Lew. Angry at thee, hey puppy! Why, what?—what dost thou see in that lovely hatchet face of thine, that is worth my being out of humour at? Blood and fire, ye dog! get out of my sight, or——

Ant. Nay, brother, this is too far—

D. Lew. Angry at him! a son of a—son's son of a whore!

Cha. Ha, ha! poor peevish—

D. Lew. I'd fain have some body poison him. [*To himself.*] Ah, that sweet creature! Must this fair flower be cropped to stick up in a piece of rascally earthen ware? I must speak to her—Puppy, stand out of my way.

Clo. Ha, ha! ay, now for it.

D. Lew. [*To* ANGELINA.] Ah! ah! ah! Madam—I pity you; you're a lovely young creature, and ought to have a handsome man yoked to you, one of understanding, too;—I am sorry to say it, but this fellow's skull's extremely thick—he can never get any thing but muffs and snuff-boxes; or, say, he should have a thing shaped like a child, you can make nothing of it but a tailor.

Clo. Odds me! why, you are testy, my dear uncle.

D. Lew. Will nobody take that troublesome dog out of my sight?—I cannot stay where he is—I'll go see my poor boy Charles—I've disturbed you, madam; your humble servant.

Ant. You'll come again, and drink the bride's health, brother?

D. Lew. That lady's health I may; and, if she'll give me leave, perhaps sit by her at table, too.

Clo. Ha, ha! bye, nuncle.

D. Lew. Puppy, good bye——

[*Exit D.* LEWIS.

Ang. An odd-humoured gentleman.

Ant. Very odd indeed, child; I suppose, in pure spite, he'll make my son Charles his heir.

Ang. Methinks I would not have a light head, nor one laden with too much learning, as my father says this Carlos is; sure there's something hid in that gentleman's concern for him, that speaks him not so mere a log.

Ant. Come, shall we go and seal, brother? The priest stays for us. When Carlos has signed the conveyance, as he shall presently, we'll then to the wedding, and so to dinner.

Cha. With all my heart, sir.

Clo. Allons, ma chere princesse! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—CARLOS *in his study, with Don* LEWIS *and* SANCHO.

D. Lew. Nay, you are undone.

Car. Then—I must study, sir, to bear my fortune.

D. Lew. Have you no greater feeling?

San. You were sensible of the great book, sir, when it fell upon your head; and won't the ruin of your fortune stir you?

Car. Will he have my books, too?

D. Lew. No, no; he has a book, a fine one, too, called 'The Gentleman's Recreation; or, The Secret Art of getting Sons and Daughters:' such a creature! a beauty in folio! Would thou hadst her in thy study, Carlos, though it were but to new-clasp her!

San. He has seen her, sir.

D. Lew. Well, and—and——

San. He flung away his book, sir.

D. Lew. Did he, faith? would he had flung away his humour, too, and spoke to her.

Car. Must my brother then have all?

D. Lew. All, all.

San. All that your father has, sir.

Car. And that fair creature, too?

San. Ay, sir.

D. Lew. Hey!

Car. He has enough then. [*Sighing.*

D. Lew. He have her, Charles! why would, would, that is——hey!

Car. May not I see her sometimes, and call her sister? I'll do her no wrong.

D. Lew. I cann't bear this! 'Sheart, I could cry for madness! Flesh and fire! do but speak to her, man.

Car. I cannot, sir; her look requires something of that distant awe, words of that soft respect, and yet such force and meaning, too, that I should stand confounded to approach her, and yet I long to wish her joy. Oh, were I born to give it, too!

D. Lew. Why, thou shalt wish her joy, boy; faith she is a good-humoured creature: she'll take it kindly.

Car. Do you think so, uncle?

D. Lew. I'll to her, and tell of you.

Car. Do, sir——Stay, uncle——will she not think me rude? I would not for the world offend her.

D. Lew. 'Fend a fiddle-stick—let me alone—I'll—I'll—

Car. Nay, but, sir! dear uncle!

D. Lew. A hum! a hum!

[*Exit Don* LEWIS.

Enter ANTONIO *and the Lawyer, with a writing.*

Ant. Where's my son?

San. There, sir, casting a figure what chopping children his brother shall have, and where he shall find a new father for himself.

Ant. I shall find a stick for you, rogue, I shall. Charles, how dost thou do? Come hither, boy.

Car. Your pleasure, sir?

Ant. Nay, no great matter, child; only to put your name here a little, to this bit of parchment: I think you write a reasonable good hand, Charles.

Car. Pray, sir, to what use may it be?

Ant. Only to pass your title in the land I have to your brother Clodio.

Car. Is it no more, sir?

Law. That's all, sir.

Ant. No, no, 'tis nothing else; look you, you shall be provided for; you shall have what books you please, and your means shall come in without your care, and you shall always have a servant to wait on you.

Car. Sir, I thank you; but, if you please, I had rather sign it before the good company below; it being, sir, so frank a gift, 'twill be some small compliment to have done it before the lady, too: there I shall sign it cheerfully, and wish my brother fortune.

Ant. With all my heart, child; it is the same thing to me.

Car. You'll excuse me, sir, if I make no great stay with you.

Ant. Do as thou wilt; thou shalt do any thing thou hast a mind to. [*Exeunt.*

San. Now has he undone himself for ever; ods-heart, I'll down into the cellar, and be stark drunk for anger. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to a Dining-room: a large table spread.*

Enter CHARINO *with* ANGELINA, CLODIO, *Don* LEWIS, *Ladies, Priests, and a Lawyer.*

Law. Come, let him bring his son's hand, and all's done. Are you ready, sir?

Priest. Sir, I shall dispatch them presently, immediately; for, in truth, I am an hungry.

Clo. 'Egad, I warrant you, the priest and I could both fall to without saying grace——Ha, you little rogue! what, you think it long too?

Ang. I find no fault, sir; better things were well done, than done too hastily——Sir, you look melancholy. [*To Don* LEWIS.

D. Lew. Sweet-smelling blossom! Ah, that I had the gathering of thee! I would stick thee in the bosom of a pretty young fellow——Ah, thou hast missed a man (but that he is so bewitched to his study, and knows no other mistress than his mind) so far above this feather-headed puppy——

Ang. Can he talk, sir?

D. Lew. Like an angel——to himself——the devil a word to a woman: his language is all upon the high business: to heaven, and heavenly wonders, to nature, and her dark and secret causes.

Ang. Does he speak so well there, sir?

D. Lew. To admiration! Such curiosities! but he cann't look a woman in the face; if he does, he blushes like fifteen.

Ang. But a little conversation, methinks——

D. Lew. Why, so I think too; but the boy's bewitched, and the devil cann't bring him to it: shall I try if I can get him to wish you joy?

Ang. I shall receive it as becomes his sister, sir.

Clo. Look, look, old Testy will fall in love by and by; he's hard at it, split me!

Cha. Let him alone; she'll fetch him about, I warrant you.

Clo. So, here my father comes! Now, priest. Hey, my brother too! that's a wonder; broke like a spirit from his cell.

Enter ANTONIO *and* CARLOS.

D. Lew. Odso, here he is; that's he; a little inclining to the lean, or so, but his understanding's the fatter for it.

Ant. Come, Carlos, 'twere your desire to see my fair daughter and the good company, and to seal before them all, and give your brother joy.

Cha. He does well; I shall think the better of him as long as I live.

Car. Is this the lady, sir?

Ant. Ay, that's your sister, Charles.

Car. Forbid it, love! [*Aside.*] Do you not think she'll grace our family?

Ant. No doubt on it, sir.

Car. Should I not thank her for so unmerited a grace?

Ant. Ay, and welcome, Charles.

D. Lew. Now, my boy, give her a gentle twist by the finger; lay your lips softly, softly, close and plump to her. [*Apart to* CARLOS.

Car. Pardon a stranger's freedom, lady—— [*Salutes* ANGELINA.] Dissolving softness! Oh, the drowning joy!—Happy, happy he, that sips eternally such nectar down, that, unconfined, may lave and wanton there in sateless draughts of ever-springing beauty!—But you, fair creature, share by far the higher joy; if, as I've read, (nay, now am sure) the sole delight of love lies only in the power to give.

Ang. How near his thoughts agree with mine! This the mere scholar I was told of! [*Aside.*]—I find, sir, you have experienced love; you seem acquainted with the passion?

Car. I've had, indeed, a dead pale glimpse in theory, but never saw the enlivening light before.

Ang. Ha, before! [*Aside.*

Ant. Well, these are very fine compliments, Charles; but you say nothing to your brother yet.

Car. Oh, yes, and wish him, sir, with any other beauty (if possible) more lasting joy than I could taste with her!

Ang. He speaks unhappily.

Clo. Ha!——what do you say, brother?

Ant. Nay, for my part, I don't understand him.

Cha. Nor I.

D. Lew. Stand clear! I do——and that sweet creature too, I hope.

Ang. Too well, I fear.

Ant. Come, come, to the writing, Charles; pr'ythee, leave thy studying, man.

Car. I'll leave my life first; I study now to be a man; before, what man was, was but my a——ment;——I am now on the proof; I find, I feel myself a man——nay, I fear it, too.

D. Lew. He has it! he has it! my boy's for it!

Clo. Come, come, will you——

D. Lew. Stand out of the way, puppy.

[*Interposing with his back to* CLOD.

Car. Whence is it, fair, that while I offer speech to you, my thoughts want words, my words their free and honest utterance? Why is it so—I tremble at your touch, and fear your frown, as would a frighted child the dreadful lightning? Yet should my dearest friend or brother dare to check my vain deluded wishes, oh, I should rise, and tear him like an offended lion——Is this, can it, must it be in a sister's power?

Clo. Come, come, will you sign, brother?

D. Lew. Time enough, puppy.

Car. O! if you knew with what precipitate haste you hurry on a deed, that makes you blessed or miserable for ever, even yet, near as you are to happiness, you'd find no danger in a moment's pause.

Clo. I say, will you sign, brother?

Car. Away, I have no time for trifles! room for an elder brother.

D. Lew. Why, did not I bid thee stand out of the way now?

Ant. Ay, but this is trifling, Charles! Come, come, your hand, man.

Car. Your pardon, sir, I cannot seal yet; had you only shewed me land, I had resigned it free and proud to have bestowed it to your pleasure. 'tis care, 'tis dirt, and trouble: but you have opened to me such a treasure, such unimagined mines of solid joy, that I perceive my temper stubborn now, even to a churlish avarice of love!—Heaven direct my fortune!

Ant. And so you won't part with your title, sir?

Car. Sooner with my soul of reason! be a plant, a beast, a fish, a fly, and only make the number of things up, than yield one foot of land—if she be tied to it.

Cha. I don't like this; he talks oddly, methinks.

Ang. Yet with a bravery of soul might warm the coldest heart. [*Aside.*

Clo. Pshaw, pox! pr'ythee, brother, you had better think of those things in your study, man!

Car. Go you and study, for 'tis time, young brother; turn o'er the tedious volumes I have read; think, and digest them well! the wholesomest food for green consumptive minds; nor dare to dream of marriage-vows, till thou hast taught thy soul, like mine, to love——Is it for thee to wear a jewel of this inestimable worth?

D. Lew. Ah, Charles! [*Kisses him.*] What say you to the scholar now, chicken?

Ang. A wonder!——Is this gentleman your brother, sir? [*To* CLODIO.

Clo. Hey! No, my——Madam, not quite——that is, he is a little a-kin by the——Pox on him! would he were buried—I cann't tell what to say to him, split me!

Ant. Positively, you will not seal then, ha?

Car. Neither——I should not blindly say I will not seal——Let me entreat a moment's pause ——for, even yet, perhaps I may. [*Sighing.*

Ang. Forbid it, fortune!

Ant. O, may you so, sir!

Clo. Ay! sir, hey! What, you are come to yourself I find, 'sheart!

Cha. Ay, ay, give him a little time, he'll think better on't, I warrant you.

Car. Perhaps, fair creature, I have done you wrong, whose plighted love and hope went hand in hand together; but, I conjure you, think my life were hateful after so base, so barbarous an act as parting them: What! to lay waste at once for ever all the gay blossoms of your forward fortune! O forbid it, Love! forbid it, Nature and Humanity! I have no land, no fortune, life, or being, while your necessity or peace requires them. Say! or give me need to think your smallest hope depends on my objected ruin; my ruin is my safety there; my fortune or my life resigned with joy, so your account of happy hours were thence but raised to any added number.

Cha. Why ay! there's some civility in this.

Clo. The fellow really talks very prettily.

Car. But if, in bare compliance to a father's will, you now but suffer marriage, or, what's worse, give it as an extorted bond, imposed on the simplicity of your youth, and dare confess you wish some honest friend would save or free you from its hard conditions: I then again have land, have life, and resolution, waiting still upon your happier fortune.

Clo. Ha, ha! pert enough, that! 'Egad! I long to see what this will come to!

Priest. In truth, unless somebody is married presently, the dinner will be spoiled, and then—nobody will be able to eat it.

Ant. Brother, I say, let's remove the lady.

Cha. Force her from him!

Car. 'Tis too late! I have a figure here!—Sooner shall bodies leave their shade; so fixed, so rooted here is every growing thought of her.

Clo. Gads me! what, now it's troublesome again, is it?

Car. Consider, fair one, now's the very crisis of our fate: you cannot have it, sure, to ask, if honour be the parent of my love: if you can love for love, and think your heart rewarded there, like two young vines we'll curl together, circling our souls in never-ending joy: we'll spring together, and we'll bear one fruit; one joy shall make us smile, one sorrow mourn; one age go with us; one hour of death shall close our eyes, and one cold grave shall hold us happy—Say but you hate me not! O speak! Give but the softest breath to that transporting thought!

Ang. Need I then speak, to say, I am far from hating you——I would say more, but there is nothing fit for me to say.

Cha. I'll bear it no longer——

Ang. On this you may depend, I cannot like that marriage was proposed me.

Car. How shall my soul requite this goodness?

Cha. Beyond patience! this is downright insolence! roguery! rape!

Ant. Part them.

Clo. Ay, ay! part them, part them.

D. Lew. Doll! dum! dum!——

[*Sings, and draws in their defence.*

Cha. Call an officer! I'll have them forced asunder.

Ang. Nay, then I am reduced to take protection here. [*Goes to* CARLOS.

Car. O ecstacy of heart! transporting joy!

D. Lew. Lorra! Dorrol! Loll!

[*Sings and dances.*

Cha. A plot! a plot against my honour! Murder! Treason! Gunpowder! I'll be revenged!

Ant. Sir, you shall have satisfaction.

Cha. I'll be revenged!

Ant. Carlos, I say, forego the lady.

Car. Never, while I have sense of being, life, or motion.

Clo. You won't! Gadso! What, then I find I must lug out upon this business? Allons! the lady, sir!

D. Lew. Lorra! Dorrol! Loll!

[*Presenting his point to* CLODIO.

Cha. I'll have his blood! by all the scars and wounds of honour in my family! [*Exit* CHAR.

Car. Hold, uncle! come, brother! sheath your anger——I'll do my best to satisfy you all——but first I would entreat a blessing here.

Ant. Out of my doors! thou art no son of mine. [*Exit* ANT.

Car. I am sorry I have lost a father, sir——For you, brother, since once you had a seeming hope, in lieu of what you've lost, half of my birthright——

Clo. No halves! no halves, sir! the whole lady!

Car. Why, then, the whole, if you can like the terms.

Clo. What terms? What terms? Come, quick, quick.

Car. The first is this——[*Snatches D.* LEWIS'S *sword.*] Win her and wear her; for, on my soul, unless my body fail, my mind shall never yield thee up a thought in love.

D. Lew. Gramercy, Charles! To him, boy!—'Egad this love has made a man of him.

Car. This is the first good sword I ever poised in anger yet; 'tis sharp I'm sure; if it but hold my putting home, I shall so hunt your insolence!——I feel the fire of ten strong spirits in me: wert thou a native fencer, in so fair a cause, I thus should hold thee at the worst defiance.

Clo. Look you, brother, take care of yourself; I shall certainly be in you the first thrust: but if you had rather, d'ye see, we'll talk a little calmly about this business.

Car. Away, trifler! I would be loth to prove thee a coward too.

Clo. Coward! why, then really, sir, if you please, midriff's the word, brother; you are a son of a whore—Allons!—

[*They fight, and* CLODIO *is disarmed.*

Car. There, sir, take your life—and mend it.

Ang. Are you wounded, sir?

Car. Only in my fears for you.—How shall we bestow us, uncle?

D. Lew. Positively, we are not safe here, this lady being an heiress. Follow me.

Car. Good angels guard us!

[*Exeunt with* ANG.

Clo. Gadso! I never fenced so ill in all my life——never in my life, split me!

Enter MONSIEUR.

Mons. Sire, here be de trompete, de hauteboy, de musique, de maitre danser, dat deseer to know if you sal be please to 'ave de masque begin.

Clo. Ha! what does this puppy say now?

Mons. Sire, de musique.

Clo. Why, ay——that's true——but——tell them——plague on them, tell them they are not ready tuned.

Mons. Sire, dare is all tune, all prepare.

Clo. Ay! Why, then, tell them that my brother's wise again, and has spoiled all, and I am bubbled, and so I sha'n't be married till next time: but I have fought with him, and he has disarmed me; and so he won't release the land, nor give me my mistress again; and I——I am undone, that's all. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Enter CHARINO, ANTONIO, *Officers, and Servants.*

Cha. Officer, do your duty: I say, seize them all.

Ant. Carry them this minute before a——How now! What! all fled?

Cha. Ha! my girl! my child! my heiress! I am abused! I am cheated! I am robbed! I am ravished! murdered! and flúng in a ditch!

Ant. Who let them out? Which way went they, villains?

Serv. Sir, we had no order to stop them; but they went out at the door not six minutes ago.

Cha. I'll pursue them with bills, warrants, actions, writs, and malice: I'm a lawyer, sir; they shall find I understand ruin.

Ant. Nay, they shall be found, sir: Run you to the port, sirrah, see if any ships are going off, and bring us notice immediately.

[*Exeunt Officers and Servants.*

Enter SANCHO, *drunk.*

San. Ban, ban, Cac-caliban. [*Singing.*

Ant. Here comes a rogue. I'll warrant, knows the bottom of all! Where's my son, villain?

San. Son, sir!

Cha. Where's my daughter, sirrah?

San. Daughter, sir!

Cha. Ay, my daughter, rascal!

San. Why, sir, they told me just now, sir—that she's—she's run away.

Ant. Dog, where's your master?

San. My master! why, they say he is——

Ant. Where, sirrah?

San. Why, he is—he is—gone along with her

Ant. Death! you dog, discover him, or——

San. Sir, I will—I will.

Ant. Where is he, villain?

San. Where, sir? Why, to be sure, he is—he is——upon my soul, I don't know, sir.

Ant. No more trifling, rascal!

San. If I do, sir, I wish this may be my poison. [*Drinks.*

Ant. Death! you dog, get out of my house or I'll——So, sir, have you found him?

Re-enter the Servant, hastily, and CLODIO.

Clo. Ay, sir, have you found them?

Serv. Yes, sir, I had a sight of them; but they were just got on board a small vessel before I could overtake them.

Cha. Death and furies!

Ant. Whither were they bound, sirrah?

Serv. Sir, I could not discover that: but they were full before the wind, with a very smart gale.

Ant. What shall we do, brother?

Clo. Be as smart as they, sir; follow them, follow them.

Cha. Send to the port this moment, and secure a ship; I'll pursue them through all the elements.

Clo. I'll follow you by the northern star.

Ant. Run to the port again, rogue; hire a ship, and tell them they must hoist sail immediately.

Enter MONSIEUR.

Clo. And you, rogue, run to my chamber, fill up my snuff-box——Cram it hard, you dog, and be here again before you get thither.

Ant. What, will you take nothing else, boy?

Clo. Nothing, sir, but snuff and opportunity—we're in haste. Allons! hey! Je vole. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Lisbon.*

Enter ELVIRA, *Don* DUART, *and Governor.*

Elv. Dear brother, let me entreat you, stay; why will you provoke your danger?

D. Du. Madam, my honour must be satisfied.

Elv. That's done already, by the degrading blow you gave him.

Gov. Pray, niece, what is it has incensed him?

Elv. Nothing but a needless quarrel.

Gov. I am sorry for him.—To whom is all this fury, nephew?

D. Du. To you, sir, or any man that dares oppose me.

Gov. Come, you are too boisterous, sir; and this vain opinion of your courage, taken on your late success in duelling, makes you daily shunned by men of civil conversation. For shame, leave off these senseless brawls; if you are valiant, as you would be thought, turn out your courage to the wars; let your king and country be the better for't.

D. Du. Yes, so I might be general——Sir, no man living shall command me.

Gov. Sir, you shall find that here in Lisbon I will: I'm every hour followed with complaints of your behaviour from men of almost all conditions: and my authority, which you presume will bear you out, because you are my nephew, no longer shall protect you now: expect your next disorder to be punished with as much severity as his that is a stranger to my blood.

D. Du. Punish me! you, nor your office, dare not do it.

Gov. Away! Justice dares do any thing she ought.

Elv. Brother, this brutal temper must be cast off: when you can master that, you shall gladly command my fortune. But if you still persist, expect my prayers and vows for your conversion only; but never means, or favour.

D. Du. Fire and furies! I'm tutored here like a mere school-boy! Women shall judge of injuries in honour!——For you, sir—I was born free, and will not curb my spirit, nor is it for your authority to tempt it: give me the usage of a man of honour, or 'tis not your government shall protect you. [*Exit.*

Gov. I am sorry to see this, niece, for your sake.

Elv. Would he were not my brother!

Enter Don MANUEL, *and Sailors, with* ANGELINA.

D. Man. Divide the spoil amongst you; this fair captive I only challenge for myself.

Gov. Ha! some prize brought in.

Sail. Sir, she's yours; you fought, and well deserve her.

Gov. Noble Don Manuel! welcome on shore! I see you are fortunate; for I presume that's some uncommon prize.

D. Man. She is indeed——These ten years I have known the seas, and many rough engagements there; but never saw so small a bark so long defended, with such incredible valour, and by two men scarce armed, too.

Gov. Is it possible?

D. Man. Nay, and their contempt of death, when taken, exceeds even all they acted in their freedom.

Gov. Pray tell us, sir.

D. Man. When they were brought aboard us, both disarmed and ready to be fettered, they looked as they had sworn never to take the bread of bondage, and on a sudden snatching up their swords, (the younger taking first from this fair maid a farewell only with his eyes,) both leapt into the sea.

Gov. 'Tis wonderful indeed.

D. Man. It wrought so much upon me, had not our own safety hindered, (at that time a great ship pursuing us,) I would, in charity, have taken them up, and, with their lives, they should have had their liberty.

Ang. Too late, alas! they're lost! (heart-wounding thought!) for ever lost!——I now am friendless, miserable, and a slave!

D. Man. Take comfort, fair one; perhaps you yet again may see them; they were not quite a league from shore, and, with such strength and courage broke through the rolling waves, they could not fail of life and safety.

Ang. In that last hope, I brook a wretched being; but if they're dead, my woes will find so many doors to let out life, I shall not long survive them.

Elv. Alas, poor lady! Come, sir, misery but weeps the more when she is gazed on—we trouble her.

Gov. I wait on you.—Your servant, sir—

[*Exeunt* ELVIRA *and Governor.*

D. Man. Now, my fair captive, though I confess you beautiful, yet give me leave to own my heart has long been in another's keeping; therefore, the favour I am about to ask, you may, at least, hear with safety.

Ang. This has engaged me, sir, to hear.

D. Man. These three years have I honourably loved a noble lady; her name Louisa, the beauteous niece of great Ferrara's duke: her person and fortune uncontrouled, sole mistress of herself and me, who long have languished in a hopeless constancy. Now I perceive, in all your language, and your looks, a softening power; nor can a suit, by you promoted, be denied; therefore I would awhile entreat your leave to recommend you, as her companion, to this lady's favour; and (as I'm sure you'll soon be near her closest thoughts) if you can think upon the honest courtesies I hitherto have shewn your modesty, and, in your happy talk, but name, with any mark of favour, me, or my unwearied love, 'twould be a generous act would fix me ever grateful to its memory.

Ang. Such poor assistance, sir, as one distressed like me can give, shall willingly be paid; if I can steal but any thoughts from my own misfortunes, rest assured, they'll be employed in healing yours.

D. Man. I'll study to deserve this goodness; for the present, think my poor house your own; at night I'll wait upon you to the lady—till when, I am your guard.

Ang. You have bound me to your service.

[*Exeunt D.* MANUEL *and* ANGELINA.

SCENE II.—*Changes to a Church, the vespers supposed to be just ended, several walking out.* CARLOS *and Don* LEWIS *rising near* LOUISA *and* HONORIA. LOUISA *observing* CARLOS.

Hon. Come, madam, shall we walk out? The crowd's pretty well over now.

Lou. But, then, that melancholy softness in his look! [*To herself.*

Hon. Cousin! Donna Louisa!

Lou. Even in his devotions, too; such graceful adorations——so sweet a——

Hon. Cousin, will you go?

Lou. Pshaw, time enough—Pr'ythee, let's walk a little this way.

Hon. What's the matter with her?

[*They walk from D.* LEWIS *and* CARLOS.

Car. For what are we reserved?

D. Lew. For no good, I'm afraid——My ill-luck don't use to give over when her hand's in; she's always in haste——One misfortune generally comes galloping in upon the back of another——Drowning we have escaped miraculously; would the fear of hanging were over too! our being so strangely saved from one, smells damnably rank of the other. Though I am obliged to thee, Charles, for what life I have, and I'll thank thee for't, if ever I set foot upon my estate again. Faith, I was just gone; if thou hadst not taken me upon thy back the last hundred yards, by this time I had been food for herrings and mackrel——But 'tis pretty well as it is; for there is not much difference between starving and drowning—All in good time—We are poor enough, in conscience, and I don't know but two days more fasting might really make us hungry too.

Lou. They are strangers, then, and seem in some necessity. [*Aside.*

Car. These are light wants to me; I find them none, when weighed with Angelina's loss; when I reflect on her distress, the hardships and the cries of helpless bondage; the insolent, the deaf desires of men in power; O, I could wish the fate, that saved us from the ocean's fury, in kinder pity of our love's distress, had buried us in one wave, embracing!

Lou. How tenderly he talks! This were, indeed, a lover! [*Aside.*

D. Lew. A most unhappy loss, indeed! But come, don't despair, boy; the ship that took us was a Portuguese, of Lisbon too, I believe; who knows but some way or other we may hear of her yet? Come, don't be melancholy.

Car. Have I not cause? Were not my force of faith superior to my hopeless reason, I could not bear the insults of my fortune; but I have raised myself by elevated faith, as far above despair, as reason lifts me from the brute.

D. Lew. Why, now, would not this make any one weep, to hear a young man talk so finely, when he is almost famished?

Lou. What were you saying, cousin?

Hon. I would have said, madam, but you would not hear me.

Lou. Pr'ythee forgive me, I was in the oddest thought: let's walk a little. Did you observe those strangers that have walked by us?

Hon. Not much; but what of them?

Lou. Did you hear nothing of their talk?

Hon. I think I did; one of them, the younger, seemed concerned for a lost mistress.

Lou. Ay, but so near, so tenderly concerned his looks as well as words, speaking an inward grief, that could not flow from every common passion. I must know more of him.

Hon. What do you mean?

Lou. Must speak to him.

Hon. By no means.

Lou. Why you see they are strangers; I believe, in some necessity; and since they seem not born to beg relief, to offer it, unasked, would add some merit to the charity.

Hon. Consider.

Lou. I hate it.—Sir! Sir!

D. Lew. Would you speak with me, madam?

Lou. If you please, with your friend—not to interrupt you, sir.

Car. Your pleasure, lady?

Lou. You seem a stranger, sir.

Car. A most unfortunate one.

Lou. If I am not deceived, in want: pardon my freedom——if I have erred, as freely tell me so; if not, as earnest of your better fortune, this trifle sues for your acceptance.

[*Gives him money.*

D. Lew. Take it, boy.

Car. A bounty so unmerited, and from a hand unknown, fills me with surprise and wonder. But give me leave, in honesty, to warn you, lady, of a too heedless purchase; for, if you mean it as a bribe to any evil you would have me practise, be not offended, if I dare not take it.

Lou. You are too scrupulous; I have no hard designs upon your honesty——only this——be wise and cautious, if you should follow me; I am observed; farewell. Jaques!—Will you walk, cousin?——[*Whispers* JAQUES.] and bring me word immediately——I am going home.

[*Exeunt* LOUISA *and* HONORIA.

D. Lew. Let's see; odsheart! follow her, man—why, 'tis all gold!

Car. Dispose it as you please.

D. Lew. I'll first have a better title to't—No, 'tis all thine, boy——I hold an hundred pistoles she's some great fortune in love with you—I say, follow her——since you have lost one wife before you had her, I'd have you make sure of another before you lose her.

Car. Fortune, indeed, has dispossessed her of my person; but her firm title to my heart, not all the subtile arts or laws of love can shake or violate.

D. Lew. Pr'ythee follow her now; methinks I'd fain see thee in bed with somebody before I die.

Car. Be not so poor in thought; let me entreat

you rather to employ them, sir, with mine, in search of Angelina's fortune.

D. Lew. Well, dear Charles, don't chide me now. I do love thee, and will follow thee.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter ANTONIO *and* CHARINO.

Ant. You heard what the sailor said, brother; such a ship has put in here, and such persons were taken in it. Therefore, my advice is, immediately to get a warrant from the government to search and take them up, wherever we can find them.

Cha. Sir, you must not tell me—I won't be choused out of my daughter; I shall expect her, sir; if not, I'll take my course; I know the law.

[*Walks about.*

Ant. You really have a great deal of dark wit, brother; but if you know any course better than a warrant to search for her, in the name of wisdom, take it; if not, here's my oath, and yours, and———how now, where's Clody?—Oh, here he comes———

Enter CLODIO, *searching his pockets.*

How now? what's the matter, boy?

Clo. Ay, it's gone, split me!

Ant. What's the matter? [*Louder.*

Clo. The best joint in Christendom.

Ant. Clody!

Clo. Sir, I have lost my snuff-box.

Ant. Psha! a trifle: get thee another, man.

Clo. Sir, 'tis not to be had—besides, I dare not shew my face at Paris without it. What do you think her grace will say to me?

Cha. Well, upon second thoughts, I am content to search.

Clo. I have searched all my pockets fifty times over, to no purpose.

Cha. Pockets!

Clo. It's impossible to fellow it, but in Paris—I'll go to Paris, split me! [*Aside.*

Cha. To Paris! Why, you don't suppose my daughter's there, sir?

Clo. I don't know but she may, sir: but I am sure they make the best joints in Europe there.

Cha. Joints!——my son-in-law, that should have been, seems strangely altered for the worse. But, come, let's to the governor.

Clo. I'll have it cried, faith; or, if that won't do, I have a lucky thought; I'll offer thirty pistoles to the finder, in the Paris Gazette, in pure compliment to the favours of Madame la Duchess de——Mum. I'll do't, faith.

Ant. Come along, Clody.

[*Exeunt* ANTONIO *and* CHARINO.

Clo. Sir, I must look a little; I'll follow you presently. My poor, pretty box! Ah, plague o' my sea-voyage!

Enter a Servant hastily, with a flambeau.

Serv. By your leave, sir, my master's coming; pray, sir, clear the way.

Clo. Ha! why, thou art pert, my love; pr'ythee, who is thy master, child?

Serv. The valiant Don Duart, sir, nephew to the governor of Lisbon.

Clo. Well, child; and what, does he eat every man he meets?

Serv. No, sir; but he challenges every man, that takes the wall of him, and always sends me before to clear the way.

Clo. Ha! a pretty harmless humour that! Is this he, child?——You may look as terrible as you please; I must banter you, split me. [*Aside.*

Enter Don DUART, *stalking up to* CLODIO.

D. Du. Do you know me, sir?

Clo. Hey, ho!

[*Looks carelessly on him, and gapes.*

D. Du. Do you know me, sir?

Clo. You did not see my snuff-box, sir, did you?

D. Du. Sir, in Lisbon, no man asks me a question covered. [*Strikes off* CLODY'S *hat.*] Now, o u know me.

Clo. Perfectly well, sir.—Hi, hi! I like you mightily—you are not a bully, sir?

D. Du. You are saucy, friend.

Clo. Ay, it's a way I have, after I'm affronted—Thou art really the most extraordinary—umph—that ever I met with. Now, sir, do you know me, split me?

D. Du. Know thee! take that, peasant!

[*Strikes him, and both draw.*

Clo. I cann't, upon my soul, sir; allons! now we shall come to a right understanding.

[*They fight.*

Serv. Help! murder! help!

Clo. Allons! to our better acquaintance, sir—Ah, ha! [*Don* DUART *falls.*] he has it! Never pushed better in my life, never in my life, split me!

Serv. Oh, my master's killed! help, ho! murder! help!

Clo. Hey! why, faith, child, that's very true, as thou sayest; and so, the devil take the hindmost. [*Exit* CLODIO.

Enter Officers.

1 *Offi.* How now? Who's that cries murder?

Serv. Oh, my master's murdered! some of you follow me; this way he took; let's after him—help! murder! help! [*Exit.*

2 *Offi.* 'Tis Don Duart.

1 *Offi.* So, pride has got a fall; he has paid for't now; you have met with your match, faith, sir. Come, let s carry the body to the good lady, his sister, Donna Elvira; you pursue the murderer. I'll warrant him some civil gentleman; ye need not make too much haste; for, if he does escape, 'tis no great matter——Come along.

[*Exeunt with the body.*

Enter CARLOS *and Don* LEWIS.

D. Lew. Come along, Charles; I'm sure 'tis she, by their description; and, if that brawny dog, the captain, has played her no foul play, she sha'n't want ransom, if all my estate can purchase it.

Car. Now, fortune guide us. [*Exeunt.*

Enter JAQUES *and Bravoes; with a chair.*

Jaq. That's he, the tallest——be sure you spare his person—only force him into this chair, and carry him as directed.

1 *Brav.* What must be done with the old fellow?

Jaq. We must have him, too, lest he should dog the other, and be troublesome. If he won't come quietly, bring him any how—Follow softly; we shall snap them as they turn the corner.

[*Exeunt after them.*

A noise of Follow, &c.—Enter CLODIO *hastily from the other side.*

Clo. Ah, pox of their noses! the dogs have smelled me out! What shall I do? If they take me I shall be hanged, split me——Ha! a door open! faith, I'll in at a venture. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Bravoes, with CARLOS *in a chair; some hauling in Don* LEWIS.

D. Lew. Oh, my poor boy, Charles!—Charles!—help! murder!

1 *Brav.* Hold your peace, fool, if you'd be well used.

D. Lew. Sir, I will not hold my peace; dogs! rogues! villains! help! murder!

1 *Brav.* Nay, then, by your leave, old gentleman.—So, bring him along.

D. Lew. Aw, aw, aw!

[*They gag him, and carry him head and heels.*

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Chamber.*

ELVIRA *and her Servants, with lights.*

Elv. Is not my brother come home yet?

Serv. I have not seen him, madam.

Elv. Go and seek him; go, all of ye, everywhere—I'll not rest till your return; take away your lights too; for my devotions are written in my heart, and I shall read them without a taper.

[*Exeunt Servants.*

Enter CLODIO, *stealing in.*

Clo. Ah, poor Clody! what will become of thee? Thy condition, I'm afraid, is but very indifferent—Followed behind, stopped before, and beset on both sides! Ah, pox o' my wit! I must be bantering, must I? But let me see—where am I?—An odd sort of a house this—all the doors open, and nobody in't; no noise, no whisper, no dog stirring!

Elv. Who's that?

Clo. Ha! a woman's voice!

Elv. Who are you? Who waits there? Stephano! Julia!

Clo. Gadso! 'tis the lady of the house: she cann't see my unfortunate face, however. Faith, I'll e'en make a grave speech, tell her my case, and beg her protection.

Elv. Speak! what are you?

Clo. Madam, a most unfortunate young gentleman.

Elv. I am sure you are a man of most ill manners, to press thus boldly to my private chamber. Whither would you? What want you?

Clo. Gracious madam, hear me; I am a stranger most unfortunate, and my distress has made me rudely press for your protection: if you refuse it, madam, I am undone for ever, by—I say, madam, I am utterly undone—'Twas coming, faith! [*As.*

Elv. Alas! his fear confounds him. What's it pursues you, sir?

Clo. An outcry of officers; the law's at my heels, madam, though justice I'm not afraid of.

Elv. How could you offend the one and not the other?

Clo. Being provoked, madam, by the insolence of my enemy, in my own defence, I just now left him dead in the street. I am a very young man, madam, and I would not willingly be hanged in a strange country, methinks; where I certainly shall be, unless your tender charity protects me—Gad, I have a rare tongue! I have a rare tongue, faith! [*Asi.*

Elv. Poor wretch, I pity him!

Clo. Madam, your house is now my only sanctuary; my altar; therefore, I beg you, upon my knees, madam, take pity of a poor bleeding victim.

Elv. Are you a Castilian?

Clo. No, madam, I was born in—in—in what d'ye call'um—in—

Elv. Nay, I ask not with purpose to betray you; were you ten thousand times a Spaniard, the nation we Portuguese most hate, in such distress, I yet would give you my protection.

Clo. May I depend upon you, madam? Am I safe?

Elv. Safe as my power, my word, or vow can make you. Enter that door, which leads you to a closet; should the officers come, as you expect, they owe such reverence to my lodgings, they'll search no further than my leave invites them.

Clo. D'ye think, madam, you can persuade them?

Elv. Fear not; I'll warrant you; away!

Clo. The breath of gods, and eloquence of angels, go along with you. [*Exit.*

Elv. Alas! who knows but that the charity I afford this stranger, perhaps my brother, elsewhere, may stand in need of? How he trembles! I hear his breath come short, hither. Be of comfort, sir; once more I give you my solemn promise for your safety.

Enter Servant and Officers with Don DUART'S *body.*

Serv. Here, bring in the body—Oh, madam! my master's killed!

Elv. What sayest thou?

Serv. Your brother, madam, my master, young Don Duart, is dead! he just now quarrelled with a gentleman, who unfortunately killed him in the street.

Elv. Ah, me!

1 *Offi.* We are informed, madam, that the murderer was seen to enter this house, which made us press into it, to apprehend him.

Elv. Oh! [*Faints.*

Serv. Help, ho! my lady faints!

Offi. Give her air; she'll recover.

[CLODIO *peeps in.*

Clo. Hey!—Why, what the devil! Am I safer than I would be now?—Exactly—I have nicked the house to a hair—Just so I did at Paris, too, when I took a lodging at a bailiff's, that had three writs against me——This damned closet, too, has ne'er a chimney to creep out at——Ah, poor Clody! would thou wert fairly in a storm at sea again! for I'm plaguily afraid thou wert not born to be drowned. [*Retires.*

Elv. Stand off; my sorrows will have way. Oh, my unhappy brother! such an end as this, thy haughty mind did long since prophesy; and, to increase my misery, thy wretched sister wilfully must make a breach of what she has vowed, or thou fall unrevenged.

Enter Governor and Servant.

Gov. Where's this unhappy sight?——Alas! he's gone past all recovery.——Reproof comes now too late.

Elv. It shall be so; I'll take the lighter evil of the two, and keep the solemn vow, to which just Heaven was witness: the wounds of perjury never can be cured; but justice may again o'ertake the murderer, when no rash vows protect him.

Gov. Take comfort, niece.

Elv. O forbear! Search for the murderer, and remove the body at your discretion, sir, to be interred. while I shut out the offensive day, and here, in solitude, indulge my sorrow; therefore, I beg my nearest friends, and you, my lord, for some few days, to spare your charitable visits.

Gov. I grieve for your misfortune, niece; but, since you'll have it so, we take our leaves. Farewell——bring forth the body.

[*Exeunt Governor, Servants, &c.*

Clo. Hey! what, are they gone away without me, and by her contrivance, too?—Gadso!

Elv. Whoe'er thou art, to whom I've given means of life, to let thee see with what religion I have kept my vow, come fearless forth, while night's thy friend, and pass unknown!

Clo. If this is not love, the devil's in it. [*Aside.*

Elv. Fly with thy utmost speed, where I may never see thee more.

Clo. Ay, that's her modesty. [*Aside.*

Elv. And let that charitable faith, thou hast found in me, persuade thee to atone thy crime by penitence.

Clo. Poor soul! I may find a better way to thank thee for it.

Elv. You are at the door now; farewell for ever! [*Exit* ELVIRA.

Clo. Which is as much as to say, what would I give to see you again!—All in good time, child— [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter LOUISA *and* JAQUES.

Lou. Were they both seized?

Jaq. Both, madam, and will be here immediately. I ran before, to give your ladyship notice.

Lou. You know my orders; when they are entered, bar all the doors, and, on your lives, let every one be mute, as I directed—I must retire a while [*Exeunt.*

Enter Bravoes, who let CARLOS *out of the chair, while others throw down Don* LEWIS, *gagged and bound.*

Car. So, gentlemen, you find I've not resisted you——but now, pray, let me know my crime? Why have you brought me hither? Where am I? If in prison, look in my face; perhaps you have mistaken me for another——[JAQUES *holds up his lanthorn, nods, and exit with the rest.*] You seem to know me, sir——All dumb and vanished! my fortune's humourous; she sports with me.

D. Lew. Aw, aw!

Car. Do you speak no other language?

D. Lew. Aw, aw, aw! [*Louder.*

Car. Nay, that's the same.

D. Lew. Oh! [*Sighing.*

Car. Poor wretch! I am afraid he would speak, if he could.

Re-enter JAQUES, *and Servants with lights, who release Don* LEWIS.

Sure they think I walk in my sleep, and won't speak for fear of waking me.

D. Lew. Sir, your most humble servant; and, now my tongue's at liberty, pray, will you do me the favour to shew me the way home again? What a pox! are you all dumb?——[*Exeunt mute.*] Well, sir, and pray what are——Charles! Ah! my dear boy! [*Kisses him.*

Car. My uncle! Nay, then, my fortune has not quite forsaken me. How came you hither, sir?

D. Lew. Faith, like a corpse into a church, boy, with my heels foremost; but, pr'ythee, how didst thou come?

Car. You saw the men that seized us; they forced me into a chair, and brought me.

D. Lew. Well, but a pox plague them, what is all this for? What would they have?

Car. That we must wait their pleasure to be informed of; they have indeed alarmed my reason, not my conscience; that's still at rest, fearless of any danger.

D. Lew. The sons of whores won't speak neither. Hey day! What's to be done, now?

Enter JAQUES, *and Servant, with a banquet, wine and lights.*

Car. More riddles yet; I dream sure!

[JAQUES *compliments Don* LEWIS *to take his chair.*]

D. Lew. For me? Sir, your most humble servant: [*Sits.*] Charles, sit down, boy. Ha, ha, ha! a parcel of silly dumb dogs! Is this all the business? Puppies! did they think I would not come to supper, without being brought neck and heels to it?

Car. Amazement all! What can it end in?

D. Lew. Never trouble thy head, pr'ythee; pox of questions: fall to, man——Delicate food truly—Here—Dumb! pr'ythee give's a glass of wine, to wet the way a little. Come, Charles, here's, here's—honest Dumb's health to thee: [*Drinks.*] Dumb's a very honest fellow, faith.

[*Claps* JAQUES *on the head.*

Car. What harmony's this? [*A flourish.*

D. Lew. Rare music, indeed; let's eat, and hear it. [*Music here.*] Mighty fine, truly——I have not made a heartier meal a great while.—[*Here* JAQUES *offers a night-cap and gown to Don* LEWIS.] Well, and what's to do now, lad? For me, boy! Odso, we lie here, do we? mighty well that again, faith; (for I was just thinking to go home, but that I had ne'er a lodging;) nay, I always said honest Dumb knew how to make his friends welcome——Well, but it's time enough yet; sha'n't we crack a bottle first? Charles is melancholy. [JAQUES *shakes his head.*] What, that's as much as to say, if I won't go, I shall be carried—Sir, your humble servant. [*Puts on the gown.*] Well, Charles, good-night, since they won't let me have a mind to stay any longer.—I'd give a pistole, though, to know what this will come to! Dumb, come along.

[*Exeunt Don* LEWIS *and* JAQUES.

Car. I am buried in amazement—[*Music is heard.*] Ha, more music? I could almost say, 'twere welcome now.

[*Music again. Don* LEWIS *appears above.*

D. Lew. So, at last I have groped out a window, that will let me into the secret; now, if any foul play should happen, I am pretty near the street, too, and can bawl out murder to the watch——But, mum, the door opens.

Enter LOUISA.

Hey! ah! what dull rogues were we not to suspect this before!——Dumb's a sly dog: 'tis she, faith——tum, dum, dum——here will be fine work presently, toll, dum, di, dum——Now, I shall see what mettle the boy's made of; tum, dum, dum.

Lou. You seem amazed, sir.

Car. Your pardon, lady, if I confess it raises much my wonder, why a stranger, friendless and unknown, should meet, unmerited, such floods of courtesy; for, if I mistake not, once this day before, I've tasted of your bounty.

Lou. I have forgot that; but I confess I saw you, sir.

Car. Why, then, was I forced hither? If you relieved me only from a soft compassion of my fortune, you could not think but such humanity might, on the slightest hint, have drawn me to be grateful.

Lou. I own I could not trust you to my fortune; I knew not but some other might have seen you—beside, methought you spoke less kind to me before.

Car. If my poor thanks were offered in too plain a dress, (as, I confess, I am little practised in the rules of graced behaviour) rather think me ignorant than rude, and pity what you cannot pardon.

Lou. Fie, you are too modest—how could you charge yourself with such a thought? I scarce can think 'tis in your nature to be rude—at least to our sex.

Car. 'Twere more unpardonable there.

Lou. Nay, now you are too strict on the other side; for there may happen times, when, what the world calls rudeness, a woman might be brought to pardon; seasons, when even modesty were ignorance——Pray be seated, sir—or I'll have it so. Suppose a woman were reduced to offer love; suppose yourself the man so loved, where could you find, at such a time, excuses for your modesty?

Car. If I could love again, my eyes would tell her; if not, I should not easily believe, at least in manners, would not seem to understand her.

Lou. Oh, they have such subtle ways to steal into a lover's heart! nay, if she's resolute, not all your strength of modesty can guard you: she'll press you still with plainer, stronger proofs; her life, her fortune should be yours: for where a woman loves, such gifts as these are trifles. Thus, like the lazy minutes, would she steal them on, which once but past, are quite forgotten.

[*Gives him jewels.*

Car. Is't possible? can there be such a woman?

Lou. Fie! I could chide you now; you would not, sure, be thought so slow of apprehension?

Car. I would not willingly be thought so vain, or so uncharitable, to suppose there could be such a one.

Lou. Nay, now, you force me to forsake my sex, and tell you plain—I cannot speak it—— yet you must know—I am this creature so reduced for you.

Car. Monstrous!

Lou. What is't you start at?

Car. Not for your beauty; though I confess you fair to a perfection, complete in all that may engage the eye: but, when that beauty fades (as time leaves none unvisited) what charm shall then secure my love? Your riches? No—an honest mind's above the bribes of fortune:—for, though distressed, a stranger, and in want, I thus return them thankless. Be modest, and be virtuous, I'll admire you; all good men will adore you; and, when your beauty and your fortune are no more, will still deliver down your name revered to ages.

Lou. If I appear too free a lover, and talk beyond the usual courage of my sex, forgive me; I'll be again the fearful, softening wretch that you would have me: my wishes shall be dumb, unless my eyes may speak them: for pity speak, for I confess your hard reproofs have struck upon my heart! Oh! say you will be mine, and make your own conditions. If you suspect my temper, bind me by the most sacred tie, and let my love, my person, and my fortune, lawfully be yours.

Car. Take heed! Consider yet, if even this humility be not the offspring of your first unruly passion: but since, at least, it carries something a better claim to my concern, I'll be at once sincere, and tell you, 'tis impossible that we should ever meet in love.

Lou. Impossible! Oh, why?

Car. Because my love, my vows, and faith, are given to another: therefore, since you find I dare be honest, be early wise, and now release me to my fortune.

Lou. I cannot part with you.

Car. You must! I cannot with my reason— Pray, let me pass! Why do you thus hang upon my arm, and strain your eyes, as if they had power to hold me?

Lou. Ungrateful! Will you go? Take heed! for you have proved I am not mistress of my temper.

Car. I see it, and am sorry, but needed not this threat to drive me; for still I dare be just, and force myself away. [*Exit* CARLOS.

Lou. Oh, torture! left! refused! despised! Have I thrown off my pride for this? Oh, insupportable! If I am not revenged, may all the—— well. [*Walks disordered.*

D. Lew. What a pox! are all these fine things come to nothing, then?—Poor soul! she's in great heat truly——Ah, silly rogue!——now, could I find in my heart to put her into good humour again—I have a great mind, faith—Odd, she's a hummer!——A strange mind, I ha'n't had such a mind a great while—Hey! ay; I'll do't faith—if she does but stay now; ah, if she does but stay!

[*As he is getting from the balcony,* LOUISA *is speaking to* JAQUES.]

Lou. Who waits there?

Enter JAQUES.

Where's the stranger?

Jaq. Madam, I met him just now walking hastily about the gallery.

Lou. Are all the doors fast?

Jaq. All barred, madam.

Lou. Put out all your lights, too, and on your lives let no one ask or answer him any question: but be you still near to observe him.

[*Exit* JAQUES.

Ah? [*Don* LEWIS *drops down.*

D. Lew. Odso, my back!

Lou. Bless me, who's this? what are you?

D. Lew. Not above fifty, madam.

Lou. Whence come you? What is your business?

D. Lew. Finishing.

Lou. Who shewed, who brought you hither?

D. Lew. Dumb, honest Dumb.

Lou. Will you be gone, sir? I have no time to fool away.

D. Lew. Yes, but you have; what! don't I know?

Lou. Pray, sir, who? What is't you take me for?

D. Lew. A delicate piece of work, truly, but not finished; you understand me?

Lou. You are mad, sir!

D. Lew. I say don't you be so modest; for there are times, do you see, when even modesty is ignorance, (pray be seated, madam—nay, I'll have it so) ah!

[*Sits down, and mimics her behaviour to* CARLOS.

Lou. Confusion! have I exposed myself to this wretch, too!——had witnesses to my folly! nay, I deserve it. [*Stands mute.*

D. Lew. So, so, I shall bring her to terms presently—you have a world of pretty jewels here, madam—ay, these now—these are a couple of fine large stones, truly; but, where a woman loves, such gifts as these are trifles. [*Mimics again.*

Lou. Insupportable! within there!

Enter Servants and Bravoes.

D. Lew. Hey! [*Rising.*

Serv. Did your ladyship call, madam?

D. Lew. I don't like her looks, faith. [*Aside.*

Lou. Here, take this fool, let him be gagged, tied neck and heels, and locked into a garret; away with him!

D. Lew. Dumb! Dumb! help, Dumb! Dumb! stand by me, Dumb? a pox of my finishing, awe! awe! [*They gag him and carry him off.*

Lou. The insolence of this fool was more provoking than the other's scorn; but I shall yet find ways to measure my revenge. [*Exit* LOUISA.

Re-enter CARLOS *in the dark.*

Car. What can this evil woman mean me? The doors all barred; the lights put out; the servants mute, and she with fury in her eyes now shot regardless by me. I would the worst would shew itself! Ha! yonder's a light; I'll follow it, and provoke my fortune. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to another Room.*

Enter ANGELINA *with a light.*

Ang. I cannot like this house; for now, as going to my rest, my ears were alarmed with the cries of one, that called for help. I've seen strange faces, too, that carry guilt and terror in their looks; and yet the officer, that placed me here, appeared of honest thought—What can this mean? No matter what, since nothing but the loss of him I love, can worse befal me! Hark, what noise! is the door fast, ah?

[*Going to shut it.*

Re-enter CARLOS *and* JAQUES, *listening.*

Car. Ha, another lady! and alone!

Ang. Ha, that voice! [*Amazed.*

Car. Save me, ye powers! and give me strength to bear this insupportable surprise of rushing joy!

Ang. My Carlos—oh!

Car. 'Tis she! my long-lost love, my living Angelina! [*Embraces her.*

Jaq. Say you so, sir? this shall to my lady.

[*Exit* JAQUES.

Ang. Oh, let me hold you ever thus, lest fate again should part us.

Car. 'Twas death, indeed, to part; but from so hard a separation, thus again to meet, is life restored.

Ang. Oh! I were happy, blessed above my sex, could but my plain simplicity of love deserve your kind endearments.

Car. Is't possible, thou miracle of goodness, that thou canst thus forget the misery, the want, the ruin my unhappy love has brought thee to? Trust me, that stormy thought has clouded even the very joy I had to see thee.

Enter JAQUES *and* LOUISA *at a distance.*

Jaq. They are there; from hence your ladyship may hear them.

Lou. Leave me.

[*Exit* JAQUES, *and* LOUISA *listens.*

Ang. I cannot bear to see you thus: for my sake, don't despond: for, while you seem in hope, I shall easily be cheerful.

Car. Oh, thou engaging softness! thy courage has revived me; no, we'll not despair; the guardian power, that hitherto has saved us, may now protect, and fix us happy.

Lou. Ha! so near acquainted—— [*Behind.*

Car. And yet our safety bids us part this moment. How came you hither?

Ang. The officer, that made me captive, proved a worthy man, and placed me here, as a companion to the lady of this dwelling.

Car. Ha, to what end?

Ang. He said, to be the advocate of his successless love; for he confessed he wooed her honourably.

Car. Is't possible? Is there a wretch, so cursed among mankind, to be her honourable lover?

Lou. So! [*In anger.*

Car. Take heed, my love; avoid her as a disease to modesty.

Lou. Very well!

Car. Oh, I have a shameful tale to tell thee of her intemperance, as would subject her even to thy loathing.

Lou. Insolent!—well!

Ang. You amaze me! pray, what is it?

Car. This is no time to tell; I had forgot my danger. Let it suffice, the doors are barred against me; now, this moment I am a prisoner to her fury; if thou canst help me to any means of safety, or escape, ask me no questions, but be quick, and tell me.

Ang. Now, you frighten me; but here, through my apartment, leads a passage to the garden; at the lower end, you'll find a mount; if you dare drop from thence, I'll shew you: but can't you say when I may hope again to see you?

Car. About an hour hence, walking in the garden, ready for your escape; for, if I live, I'll come provided with the means to make it sure—Now I dare thank thee, fortune.

Ang. You will not fail?

Car. If I survive, depend on me. 'Till when, may Heaven support thy innocence!

Ang. Follow me—— [*Exeunt hastily.*

Lou. Are you so nimble, sir? Who was there?

Enter JAQUES.

Run, take help, and stop the stranger; he is now making his escape through the garden! fly!—[*Exit* JAQUES.]—Love and revenge, like vipers, gnaw upon my quiet, and I must change their food, or leave my being. No, if I forego a second time that dear support, my pride, may I become as miserable as that wretch, that destined fool he dotes on! Ha! she is returned! yonder she passes, with what assured contentment in her looks!—how pleased the thing is!—strangely impudent—sure! the ugly creature thinks I won't strangle her.

Enter JAQUES.

Now, have you brought him?

Jaq. Madam, we made what haste we could, but the gentleman reached the mount before us, and escaped over the garden wall.

Lou. Escaped, villain! durst thou tell me so?

Jaq. If your ladyship had called me a little sooner, we had taken him. Who the devil is this stranger? [*Aside.*

Lou. Fool, that I am! I betray myself to my own servants. Well, 'tis no matter, bid the hautboys stay; I have directions for them. Go—[*Exit* JAQUES.]—He has not left me hopeless yet; an hour hence, he promised to be here again; and, if he keeps his word, (as I've an odious cause to fear he will) he yet, at least in my revenge, shall prove me woman.

[*Exit* LOUISA.

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

Enter D. DUART *disguised with a servant.*

D. Du. Where did you find him?

Serv. Hard by, sir, at an house of civil recreation; he's now coming forth; that's he.

Enter CLODIO.

D. Du. I scarce remember him. I would not willingly mistake—I'll observe him.

Clo. So! now if I can but pick up an honest fellow, to crack one healing bottle, I think I shall finish the day as smartly as the grand signior—Hold, let me see, what has my hasty refreshment cost me here; umb—umb—umb—[*Counts his money.*]—seven pistoles, by Jupiter; why, what a plaguy income this jade must have in a week, if she's thus paid by the hour!

D. Du. 'Tis the same! leave me—[*Exit Servant.*]—Your servant, sir.

Clo. Sir—your humble servant.

D. Du. Pardon a stranger's freedom, sir; but, when you know my business——

Clo. Sir, if you'll take a bottle, I shall be proud of your acquaintance; and if I don't do your business before we part, I'll knock under the table.

D. Du. Sir, I shall be glad to drink with you; but at present am incapable of sitting to it.

Clo. Why, then, sir, you shall only drink as long as you can stand; we'll have a bottle here, sir. Hey, Madona! [*Calls at the door.*

D. Du. A very frank-humoured gentleman: I'll know him farther—I presume, sir, you are not of Portugal?

Clo. No, sir—I am a kind of a—what-d'ye-call-'um—a sort of a here—and—thereian; I am a stranger no where.

D. Du. Have you travelled far, sir?

Clo. My tour of Europe, or so, sir—

Enter Servant with wine.

Clo. So, so! here's the wine! come; sir, to our better acquaintance—faith, I like you mightily—Allons!—[*Drinks.*]—Morbleu! ce n'est pas mauvais! Allons, encore, hey! Vive l'amour! Quand Iris, &c. [*Sings.*

D. Du. I find, sir, you have taken a taste of all the countries you have travelled through: but I presume your chief amusement has lain among the ladies. You fared well in France, I hope?

Clo. Yes, faith, as far as my pocket would go: the devil a stroke without it: no money, no mademoiselle; no ducat, no duchess: no pistole, no princess—By the way, let me tell you, sir, your Lisbonites are held up at a pretty smart rate, too—I was forced to come down to the tune of seven pistoles here—a man may keep a pad of his own cheaper than he can ride post, split me!

D. Du. I find, sir, you know England, then?

Clo. Ay, sir, and every woman there that's worth knowing.

D. Du. But I wonder, sir, that, in a country so famed for handsome women, the men are so generally blamed for their scandalous usage of them.

Clo. Oh, damned scandalous, sir—they use their mistresses as bad as their wives, faith. I tell you what, sir; I knew a citizen's daughter there, that run away with a lord, who, in the first six months of her preferment, never stirred out, but she made the ladies cry at her equipage; and, about eight months after, I think, one morning reeling pretty early into a certain house in the Savoy, I found the self-same, cast-off, solitary lady, in a room with bare walls, dressing her dear, pretty head there, in the corner bit of a looking-glass, prudently supported by a quartern brandy-pot, upon the head of an oyster-barrel.

D. Du. I find few mistresses make their fortunes there; but pray, sir, among all your adventures, has no particular lady's merit encouraged you to advance your own marriage?

Clo. Sir, I have been so near marriage, that my wedding-day has been come; but it was never over yet, split me!

D. Du. How so, sir?

Clo. Why, the priest, the bride, and the dinner, were all ready dressed, faith; but, before I could fall to, my elder brother, sir, comes me in with a damned long stride, and a sharp stomach—says a short grace, and—whipped her up like an oyster.

D. Du. You had ill fortune, sir.

Clo. Sir, fortune is not much in my debt; for you must know, sir, though I lost my wife, I have escaped hanging since, here in Lisbon.

D. Du. That I know you have; be not amazed, sir.

Clo. Hey! what the devil! have I been all this while treating an officer, that has a warrant against me?—Pray, sir, if it be no offence—may I beg the favour to know who you are?

D. Du. Let it suffice, I own myself your friend—I am your debtor, sir; you fought a gentleman they call Don Duart—I knew him well; he was a proud insulting fellow, and my mortal foe: but you killed him, and I thank you; nay, I saw you do it fairly, too; and for the action, I desire you will command my sword or fortune.

Clo. Pray, sir—is there no joke in all this?

D. Du. There, sir; the little all I'm master of, may serve, at present, to convince you of my sincerity; I ask for no return, but to be informed how I may do you farther service. [*Gives him a purse.*

Clo. Sir, your health——I'll give you information presently.—[*Drinks.*]—Pray, sir, do you know the gentleman's sister, that I fought with? That is, do you know what reputation, what fortune she has?

D. Du. I know her fortune to be worth above twelve thousand pistoles; her reputation yet unsullied; but pray, sir, why may you ask this?

Clo. Now, I'll tell you, sir—twelve thousand pistoles, you say?

D. Du. I speak the least, sir.

Clo. Why, this very lady, after I had killed her brother, gave me the protection of her house; hid me in her closet, while the officers that brought in the dead body came to search for me; and, as soon as their backs were turned, poor soul! hur-

ried me out at a private door, with tears in her eyes, faith! Now, sir, what think you? Is not this hint broad enough for a man to make love upon?

D. Du. Confusion! [*Aside.*

Clo. Look you, sir, now, if you dare, give me a proof of your friendship; will you do me the favour to carry a letter to her?

D. Du. Let me consider, sir——Death and fire! is all her height of sorrow but dissembled, then? A prostitute, even to the man supposed my murderer! If it be true, the consequence is soon resolved——but this requires my farther search.—[*Aside.*]—May I depend on this for truth, sir?

Clo. Why, sir, you don't suppose I'd banter a lady of her quality?

D. Du. Damnation!—[*Aside.*]—Well, sir, I'll take your letter; but first let me be well acquainted with my errand.

Clo. Sir, I'll write this moment; if you please, we'll step into the house here, and finish the business over another bottle.

D. Du. With all my heart.

Clo. Allons! Entrez. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—ELVIRA *is discovered alone in mourning, a lamp by her.* Don DUART *enters behind disguised.*

D. Du. Thus far I am passed, unknown to any of the servants——now for the proof of what I fear——Ha! yonder she is——This close retirement, those sable colours, the solemn silence that attends her, no friends admitted, nor even the day to visit her—these seem to speak a real sorrow; if not, the counterfeit is deep indeed—I'll fathom it——Madam——

Elv. Who's there? another murderer! where are my servants? will nothing but my sorrows wait upon me?

D. Du. Your pardon, lady; I have no evil meaning; this letter will inform you of my business, and excuse this rude intrusion.

Elv. For me! whence comes it, sir?

D. Du. The contents, madam, will explain to you—She seems amazed! looks almost through the letter——I should suspect the stranger had belied her, but that he gave me such convincing circumstances——Ha, she pauses! 'sdeath! a smile too——I fear her now!

Elv. My prayers are heard; justice at length has overtaken the murderer: his vowed protection having been strictly paid, I now, unperjured, may revenge my brother's blood. It lies on me, if I neglect this fair occasion: but 'twere not safe to shew my thought; therefore, to be just, I must dissemble. [*Aside.*] I ask your pardon for my rudeness, sir; upon your friend's account you might, indeed, have claimed a better welcome.

D. Du. So; then she's damned, I find. But I'll have more, and bring them face to face. [*Aside*] My friend, madam, thought his visits would be unseasonable, before the sad solemnity of your brother's funeral.

Elv. A needless fear! My brother, sir! Alas, I owe your friend my thanks, for having eased our family of so scandalous a burthen! A riotous, unmannered fellow; I blush to speak of him.

D. Du. Oh, patience! patience! [*Aside.*

Elv. Pray, let him know, his absence was the real cause of this mistaken mourning: 'tis true indeed, I gave it out 'tis for my brother's death; but women's hearts and tongues, you know, must not always hold alliance; you'd think me fond and forward, should not we now and then dissemble.

D. Du. How shall I forbear her? [*Aside.*

Elv. I grow impatient till he's wholly mine——to-morrow! 'tis an age! I'll make him mine to-night——I'll write to him this minute——Can you have patience, sir, till I prepare a letter for you?

D. Du You may command me, madam.

Elv. I'll dispatch immediately——will you walk this way, sir?

D. Du. Madam, I wait on you——Revenge and daggers! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—LOUISA'S *House.*

Enter LOUISA *and* JAQUES.

Lou. Is the lady seized?

Jaq. Yes, madam, and half dead with the fright.

Lou. Let them be ready to produce her, as I directed. When the stranger's taken, bring me immediate notice; 'tis near his time, away.—[*Exit* JAQUES.] Had he not loved another, methinks I could have borne this usage, sat me down alone content, and found a secret pleasure in complaining; but to be slighted for a girl, a sickly, poor, unthinking wretch, incapable of love; that, that stabs home! 'Tis poison to my thoughts, and swells them to revenge! My rival, no, she shall never triumph. Hark! what noise! they have him sure! How now!

Enter JAQUES.

Jaq. Madam, the gentleman is taken.

Lou. Bring him in——Revenge, I thank thee now!

Enter Bravoes with CARLOS *disarmed.*

So, sir, you are returned, it seems; you can love then! You have an heart, I find, though not for me! Perhaps you came to seek a worthier mistress here; 'twould be uncharitable to dis-

point your love—I'll help your search; if she be here, be sure she's safe—Open that door there.

Enter more Bravoes with ANGELINA, *an handkerchief on her neck, which they hold ready to strangle her.*

Now, sir, is this the lady?

Car. My Angelina! Oh!

Lou. Now, let me see you smile, and rudely throw me from your arms; now scorn my love, my passion, and my fortune; now, let your squeamish virtue fly me as a disease to modesty; and tell her, now, your shameful tale of my intemperance!

Car. Oh, cruelty of fate! that could betray such innocence!

Lou. What, not a word to soften yet thy obstinate aversion! Thou wretched fool, thus to provoke thy ruin——End her! [*To the Bravoes.*

Car. Oh, hold! for pity hold, and hear me!

Lou. I've learned from you to use my pity—On one condition yet she lives an hour; but, if refused—

Car. Name not a refusal; be it danger, death, or tortures; any thing that life can do to save her.

Lou. Presuming fool! were I inclined to save her life, (which, by my hopes of peace, I do not mean) canst thou believe this insolent concern for her to my face would not provoke my vengeance?

Car. Yet hold! forgive my rashness, I was to blame, indeed; but passion has transported both of us.

Lou. How he disarms my anger! But must my rival triumph then?

Ang. Charge me not with such abhorred ingratitude: be witness, Heaven, I'll for ever serve you, court you, and confess you my preserver.

Car. For pity, yet resolve, and force your temper to a moment's pause. See, at your feet, my humbled scorn imploring, crushed, and prostrate, like a vile slave, that falls below your last contempt, and, trembling, begs for mercy.

Lou. He buries my revenge in blushes. Now, live long and happily; forgive my follies past, and you have overpaid me. [*Joins their hands.*

Car. My Angelina! do I then live to hold thee thus? Oh, I have a thousand things to say, to ask, to weep, and hear of thee—But, first, let's kneel, and pay our thanks to Heaven, and this our kind preserver.

Lou. Nay, now, you give me a confusion.—[*Raises them.*] But if you dare trust me with the story of your love's distress, as far as my fortune can, command it freely to supply your present wants, or any future means proposed to give you lasting happiness.

Car. Eternal rounds of never-ending peace reward your wondrous bounty!——But I have been too busy in my joy; I almost had forgot my friendly uncle, the ancient gentleman that first came hither with me; how have you disposed of him?

Lou. I think he's here, and safe——Who waits there? [*Enter* JAQUES.] Release the gentleman above, and tell him, that his friends desire him. [*Exit* JAQUES.] You'll pardon, sir, the treatment I have shewn him; he made a little too merry with my folly, which, I confess, at that time, something too far incensed me.

Car. He's old and cheerful, apt to be free; but he'll be sorry when his humour gives offence.

Enter Don LEWIS, JAQUES *bowing to him.*

D. Lew. Pr'ythee, honest Dumb, don't be so ceremonious. A pox on thee! I tell thee it's very well as it is, (only my jaws ache a little:) but as long as we're all friends, it's no great matter.——My dear Charles, I must buss thee, faith!——Madam, your humble servant——I beg your pardon, d'ye see——you understand me? [*Exit* JAQUES.

Lou. I hope we are all friends, sir.

D. Lew. I hope we are, madam——I am an honest old fellow, faith: though, now and then, I'm a little odd, too.

Car. He's a stranger, uncle.

D. Lew. What, my little blossom! my gilliflower! my rose! my pink! my tulip! faith, I must smell thee. [*Salutes* ANGELINA.] Odd, she's a delicate nosegay! I must have her touzed a little——Charles, you must gather to-night: I can stay no longer——Well, faith, I am heartily joyed to see thee, child.

Ang. I thank you, sir, and wish I may deserve your love: our fortune, once again, is kind; but how it comes about——

D. Lew. Does not signify three-pence; when fortune pays me a visit, I seldom trouble myself to know which way she came—I tell you, I am glad to see you.

Enter JAQUES.

Jaq. Madam, here's the lord governor come to wait upon your ladyship.

Lou. At this late hour! What can his business be? Desire his lordship to walk in.

Enter Governor.

Gov. Pardon, madam, this unseasonable visit.

Lou. Your lordship does me honour.

Gov. At least, I hope my business will excuse it. Some strangers, here below, upon their offered oaths, demanded my authority to search your house for a lost young lady, to whom the one of them affirms himself the father: but the respect I owe your ladyship made me refuse their search, till I had spoken with you.

Ang. It must be they——Now, madam, your protection, or we yet are lost.

Lou. Be not concerned! Would you avoid them?

Car. No, we must be found; let them have entrance; we have an honest cause, and would provoke its trial.

Lou. Conduct the gentlemen without. [*Exit* JAQUES.] My lord, I'll answer for their honesty; and, as they are strangers, where the law's severe, must beg you'd favour and assist them.

Gov. You may command me, madam; though

there's no great fear: for, having heard the most that they could urge against them, I found, in their complaints, more spleen and humour than any just appearance of a real injury.

Enter CHARINO, ANTONIO, *and* CLODIO.

Cha. I'll have justice.

Ant. Don't be too hot, brother.

Cha. Sir, I demand justice.

Car. My father! Sir, your pardon and your blessing.

Ant. Why, truly, Charles, I begin to be a little reconciled to the matter; I wish you well, though I cann't join you together; for my friend and brother here is very obstinate, and will admit of no satisfaction: but, however, Heaven will bless you in spite of his teeth.

Cha. This is all contrivance, roguery! I am abused! I say, deliver my daughter——she is an heiress, sir; and to detain her is a rape in law, sir, and I'll have you all hanged; therefore, no more delays, sir; for I tell you before-hand, I am a wise man, and 'tis impossible to trick me.

Ant. I say, you are too positive, brother; and when you learn more wisdom, you'll have some.

Cha. I say, brother, this is mere malice, when you know, in your own conscience, I have ten times your understanding; for you see I am quite of another opinion: and so, once more, my lord, I demand justice against that ravisher.

Gov. Does your daughter, sir, complain of any violence?

Cha. Your lordship knows young girls never complain, when the violence is over; he has taught her better, I suppose.

Ang. [*To* CHARINO, *kneeling.*] Sir, you are my father, bred me, cherished me, gave me my affections, taught me to keep them hitherto within the bounds of honour and of virtue; let me conjure you, by the chaste love my mother bore you, when she preferred, to her mistaken parents' choice, her being yours without a dower, not to bestow my person, where those affections ne'er can follow—I cannot love that gentleman more than a sister ought; but here my heart's subdued, even to the last compliance with my fortune: he, sir, has nobly wooed and won me; and I am only his, or miserable.

Cha. Get up again.

Gov. Come, sir, be persuaded; your daughter has made an honourable and happy choice; this severity will but expose yourself and her.

Cha. My lord, I don't want advice: I'll consider with myself, and resolve upon my own opinion.

Enter JAQUES.

Jaq. My lord, here's a stranger without, inquires for your lordship, and for a gentleman that calls himself Clodio.

Clo. Hey! Ah, mon cher ami!

Enter Don DUART, *disguised.*

Well, what news, my dear? Has she answered my letter?

D. Du. There, sir——This to your lordship. [*Gives him a letter, and whispers.*

Gov. Married to-night! and to this gentleman sayest thou? I'm amazed!

D. Du. Here is her choice, my lord.

Clo. [*Reading the letter.*]—Um—um—charms—irresistible—excuse—so soon—passion—hazards—consent—provision—children—settlement—marriage——If this is not plain, the devil's in't—Hold, here's more, faith— [*Reads to himself.*

Gov. 'Tis very sudden——but give my servant I'll wait upon her.

Clo. Ha, ha, ha! poor soul! I'll be with her presently; and, faith, since I have made my own fortune, I'll e'en patch up my brother's too. Hark you, my dear dad, that should ha' been—This business is all at an end—for, look you, I find your daughter's engaged; and, to tell you the truth, so am I, faith. If my brother has a mind to marry her, let him; for I shall not, by me——And now, gentlemen and ladies, if you will do me the honour to grace mine and the lady Elvira's wedding, such homely entertainment as my poor house affords, you shall be all heartily welcome to.

D. Lew. Thy house! ha, ha! Well said, poppy!

Clo. Ha! old Testy!

Cha. What dost thou mean, man? [*To* CLODIO.

Gov. 'Tis even so, I can assure you, sir; I have, myself, an invitation from the lady's own hand, that confirms it: I know her fortune well, and am surprised at it.

Ang. Blessed news! This seems a forward step to reconcile us all.

Cha. If this be true, my lord, I have been thinking to no purpose; my design is all broke to pieces.

Ant. Come, brother, we'll mend it as well as we can; and since that young rogue has rudely turned tail upon your daughter, I'll fill up the blank with Charles's name, and let the rest of the settlement stand as it was.

Cha. Hold! I'll first see this wedding, and then give you my final resolution.

Clo. Come, ladies, if you please, my friend will shew you.

Lou. Sir, we wait upon you.

Cha. This wedding's an odd thing.

D. Lew. Ha, ha! if it should be a lie, now. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—ELVIRA'S *Apartment*——ELVIRA *alone, with* CLODIO'S *letter in her hand.*

Elv. At how severe a price do women purchase an unspotted fame, when even the justest title cannot assure possession! When we reflect upon the insolent and daily wrongs which men and scandal throw upon our actions, 'twere enough to make an honest mind despair! If we are fair and chaste, we are proud; if free, we are wanton; cold, we are cunning; and if kind, forsaken—nothing we do or think on, be the

notive ever so just or generous, but still the malice, or the guilt of men, interprets to our shame. Why should this stranger, else, this wretched stranger, whose forfeit life I rashly saved, presume, from that mistaken charity, to tempt me with his love?

Enter a Servant.

Hark! what music's that? [*Flourish.*

Serv. Madam, the gentlemen are come.

Elv. 'Tis well; are the officers ready?

Serv. Yes, madam, and know your ladyship's orders.

Elv. Conduct the company. Now, justice shall uncloud my fame, and see my brother's death revenged.

Enter hautboys playing, CLODIO *singing,* D. DUART, *Governor,* D. MANUEL, LOUISA, CARLOS, ANGELINA, ANTONIO, CHARINO, *and* D. LEWIS.

Clo. Well, madam, you see I am punctual—you've nicked your man, faith; I am always critical—to a minute. You'll never stay for me. Ladies and gentlemen, I desire you'll do me the honour of being better acquainted here—my lord—

Gov. Give you joy, madam.

Clo. Nay, madam, I have brought you some near relations of my own, too——This Don Antonio, who will shortly have the honour to call you daughter.

Ant. The young rogue has made a pretty choice, faith!

Clo. This Don Charino, who was very near having the honour of calling me son. This my elder brother—and this my noble uncle, Don Choleric Snapshorto de Testy.

D. Lew. Puppy!

Clo. Peevish!

D. Lew. Madam, I wish you joy with all my heart; but, truly, I cann't much advise you to marry this gentleman; because, in a day or two, you'll really find him extremely shocking: those, that know him, generally give him the title of Don Dismallo Thickscullo de Halfwitto.

Clo. Well said, nuncle—ha, ha!

D. Du. Are you provided of a priest, sir?

Clo. Ay, ay, pox on him! would he were come, though!

D. Du. So would I. I want the cue to act this justice, on my honour; yet I cannot read the folly in her looks. [*Aside.*

Gov. You have surprised us, madam, by this sudden marriage.

Elv. I may yet surprise you more, my lord.

D. Du. Sir, don't you think your bride looks melancholy?

Clo. Ay, poor fool, she's modest—but I have a cure for that——Well, my princess, why that demure look, now?

Elv. I was thinking, sir——

Clo. I know what you think of——You don't think at all——You don't know what to think—You neither see, hear, feel, smell, nor taste——You ha'n't the right use of one of your senses—In short, you have it. Now, my princess, have not I nicked it?

Elv. I am sorry, sir, you know so little of yourself, or me.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, the priest is come.

Elv. Let him wait, we've no occasion yet——Within, there—seize him.

[*Several Officers rush in, who seize* CLODIO, *and bind him.*

D. Du. Ha!

Gov. What can this mean?

Clo. Gads me! what, is my deary in her frolics already?

Elv. And now, my lord, your justice on that murderer.

Gov. How, madam!

Clo. That bitch, my fortune!

D. Lew. Madam, upon my knees, I beg you don't carry the jest too far; but if there be any real hopes of his having a halter, let's know it in three words, that I may be sure at once for ever, that no earthly thing but a reprieve can save him. [*Apart to* ELVIRA.

Ant. Pray, madam, who accuses him?

Elv. His own confession, sir.

Cha. Of murder, say you, madam?

Elv. The murder of my brother.

Gov. Where was that confession made?

Elv. After the fact was done, my lord, this man, pursued by justice, took shelter here, and, trembling, begged of me for my protection: he seemed, indeed, a stranger, and his complaints so pitiful, that I, little suspicious of my brother's death, promised, by a rash and solemn vow, I would conceal him: which vow, Heaven can witness with what distraction in my thoughts I strictly kept, and paid; but he, alas! mistaking this my hospitable charity for the effects of a most vile, preposterous love, proceeds upon his error, and in his letter, here, addresses me for marriage; which I, once having paid my vow, answered in such prevailing terms, upon his folly, as now have, unprotected, drawn him into the hands of justice.

D. Du. She is innocent, and well has disappointed my revenge. [*Aside.*

D. Lew. So, now I am a little easy—the puppy will be hanged.

Gov. Give me leave, madam, to ask you yet some farther questions.

Clo. Ay,—I shall be hanged, I believe.

Cha. Nay, then, 'tis time to take care of my daughter; for I am convinced that my friend Clody is disposed of——and so, without compliment, do you see, children, Heaven bless you together.

[*Joins* CARLOS *and* ANGELINA'S *hands.*

Car. This, sir, is a time unfit to thank you as we ought.

Ant. Well, brother, I thank you, however; Charles is an honest lad, and well deserves her;

but poor Clody's ill fortune I could never have suspected.

D. Lew. Why, you would be positive, though you know, brother, I always told you, Dismal would be hanged; I must plague him a little, because the dog has been pert with me——Clody, how dost thou do? Ha! why you are tied!

Clo. I hate this old fellow, split me!

D. Lew. Thou hast really made a damned blunder here, child, to invite so many people to a marriage-knot, and, instead of that, it is like to be one under the left ear.

Clo. I'd fain have him die.

D. Lew. Well, my dear, I'll provide for thy going off, however; let me see—you'll only have occasion for a nosegay, a pair of white gloves, and a coffin: look you, take you no care about the surgeons, you shall not be anatomized—I'll get the body off with a wet finger—Though, methinks, I'd fain see the inside of the puppy, too.

Clo. Oh, rot him! I cann't bear this.

D. Lew. Well, I won't trouble you any more now, child; if I am not engaged, I don't know but I may come to the tree, and sing a stave or two with thee—Nay, I'll rise on purpose——though you will hardly suffer before twelve o'clock, neither—ay, just about twelve—about twelve you'll be turned off.

Clo. Oh, curse consume him!

Gov. I am convinced, madam; the fact appears too plain.

D. Lew. Yes, yes, he'll suffer.

Gov. What says the gentleman? Do you confess the fact, sir?

Clo. Will it do any good, my lord?

Gov. Perhaps it may, if you can prove it was not done in malice.

Clo. Why, then, to confess the truth, my lord, I did pink him, and am sorry for it; but it was none of my fault, split me.

Elv. Now, my lord, your justice.

D. Du. Hold, madam, that remains in me to give; for know, your brother lives, and happy in the proof of such a sister's virtue.

[*Discovers himself.*

Elv. My brother! Oh, let my wonder speak my joy!

Clo. Hey!

[CLODIO *and his friends seem surprised.*

Gov. Don Duart! living and well! How came this strange recovery?

D. Du. My body's health the surgeon has restored: but here's the true physician of my mind: the hot, distempered blood, which lately rendered me offensive to mankind, his just resenting sword let forth, which gave me leisure to reflect upon my follies past; and, by reflection, to reform.

Elv. This is indeed a happy change.

Gov. Release the gentleman.

Clo. Here, Testy, pr'ythee do so much as untie this a little.

D. Lew. Why, so I will, sirrah; I find thou hast done a mettled thing; and I don't know whether it is worth my while to be shocked at thee any longer.

Elv. I ask your pardon for the wrong I have done you, sir; and blush to think how much I owe you, for a brother thus restored.

Clo. Madam, your very humble servant; it is mighty well as it is.

D. Du. We are indeed his debtors both, and, sister, there's but one way now of being grateful. For my sake, give him such returns of love as he may yet think fit to ask, or you, with modesty, can answer.

Clo. Sir, I thank you; and when you don't think it impudence in me to wish myself well with your sister, I shall beg leave to make use of your friendship.

D. Du. This modesty commends you, sir.

Ant. Sir, you have proposed like a man of honour; and if the lady can but like it, she shall find those among us, that will make up a fortune to deserve her.

Car. I wish my brother well; and as I once offered him to divide my birth-right, I'm ready still to put my words into performance.

D. Lew. Nay, then, since I find the rogue is no longer like to be an enemy to Charles, as far as a few acres go, I'll be his friend too.

D. Du. Sister!

Elv. This is no trifle, brother; allow me a convenient time to think, and if the gentleman continues to deserve your friendship, he shall not much complain I am his enemy.

D. Lew. So, now it will be a wedding again, faith!

Car. Come, my Angelina,
Our bark, at length, has found a quiet harbour,
And the distressful voyage of our loves
Ends not alone in safety, but reward.
Now we unlade our freight of happiness,
Of which, from thee alone my share's derived;
For all my former search in deep philosophy,
Not knowing thee, was a mere dream of life:
But love, in one soft moment, taught me more
Than all the volumes of the learned could reach
Gave me the proof, when nature's birth began,
To what great end the Eternal formed a man.

[*Exeunt.*

EPILOGUE.

AN epilogue's a tax on authors laid,
And full as much unwillingly is paid.
Good lines, I grant, are little worth; but yet
Coin has been always easier raised than wit.
I fear we'd made but very poor campaigns,
Had funds been levied from the grumbling brains.)
Beside, to what poor purpose should we plead,
When you have once resolved a play shall bleed?
But then again, a wretch, in any case,
Has leave to say why sentence should not pass.
First, let your censure from pure judgment flow,
And mix with that some grains of mercy too;
On some your praise like wanton lovers you bestow.
Thus have you known a woman plainly fair,
At first scarce worth your two days pains or care;
Without a charm, but being young and new,
(You thought five guineas far beyond her due.)
But when pursued by some gay, leading lover,
Then every day her eyes new charms discover;
Till at the last, by crowds of beaus admired,
She has raised her price to what her heart desired,
New gowns and petticoats, which her airs required.
So, miss, and poet too, when once cried up,
Believe their reputation at the top:
And know, that while the liking fit has seiz'd you,
She cannot look, he write, too ill to please you.
How can you bear a sense of love so gross,
To let mere fashion on your taste impose?
Your taste refined, might add to your delight:
Poets from you are taught to raise their flight;
For as you learn to judge, they learn to write.

SHE WOU'D AND SHE WOU'D NOT.

BY

CIBBER.

PROLOGUE.

CRITICS! though plays without your smiles subsist,
Yet this was writ to reach your generous taste,
And not in stern contempt of any other guest.
Our humble author thinks a play should be,
Though tied to rules, like a good sermon, free
From pride, and stoop to each capacity.
Though he dares not, like some, depend alone
Upon a single character new shewn;
Or only things well said, to draw the town.
Such plays, like looser beauties, may have power
To please, and sport away a wanton hour;
But wit and humour, with a just design,
Charm, as when beauty, sense, and virtue join.
Such was his just attempt, though, 'tis confest,
He's only vain enough t' have done his best;
For rules are but the posts that mark the course,
Which way the rider should direct his horse;
He that mistakes his ground is easily beat,
Though he that runs it true mayn't do the feat;
For 'tis the straining genius that must win the heat.
O'er chokejade to the ditch a jade may lead,
But the true proof of Pegasus's breed,
Is when the last act turns the lands with Dimple's speed.
View then, in short, the method that he takes:
His plot and persons he from nature makes,
Who for no bribe of jest he willingly forsakes:
His wit, if any, mingles with his plot,
Which should on no temptation be forgot:
His action's in the time of acting done,
No more than from the curtain, up and down
While the first music plays, he moves his scene
A little space, but never shifts again.
From his design no person can be spared,
Or speeches lopt, unless the whole be marred.
No scenes of talk for talking's sake are shewn
Where most abruptly, when their chat is done,
Actors go off, because the poet——cann't go on
His first act offers something to be done,
And all the rest but lead that action on;
Which, when pursuing, scenes i' th' end discover
The game's run down, of course the play is over.
Thus much he thought 'twas requisite to say,
(For all here are not critics born) that they
Who only used to like, might learn to taste a play.
But now he flies for refuge to the fair,
Whom he must own the ablest judges here.
Since all the springs of his design but move
From beauty's cruelty subdued by love,
E'en they, whose hearts are yet untouched, must know,
In the same case, sure, what their own woo'd do:
You best should judge of love, since love is born of you.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Don MANUEL, *Father to Rosara.*
Don PHILIP, *slighted by Hypolita.*
Don LOUIS, *Nephew to Don Manuel.*
OCTAVIO, *in love with Rosara.*
TRAPPANTI, *a cast Servant of Don Philip.*
SOTO, *Servant to Don Philip.*

WOMEN.

HYPOLITA, *secretly in love with Don Philip.*
ROSARA, *in love with Octavio.*
FLORA, *Confidante to Hypolita.*
VILETTA, *Woman to Rosara.*

Host, Alguazil, and Servants.

SCENE,—*Madrid.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Inn in Madrid.*

Enter TRAPPANTI, *alone, talking to himself.*

Indeed, my friend Trappanti, thou'rt in a very thin condition; thou hast neither master, meat, nor money: not but, couldst thou part with that unappeaseable itch of eating, too, thou hast all the ragged virtues that were requisite to set up an ancient philosopher: contempt and poverty, kicks, thumps, and thinking, thou hast endured with the best of them; but—when fortune turns thee up to hard fasting, that is to say, positively not eating at all, I perceive thou art a downright dunce, with the same stomach, and no more philosophy, than a hound upon horse-flesh—Fasting's the devil!—Let me see—this, I take it, is the most frequented inn about Madrid, and if a keen guest or two should drop in now—Hark!

Host. [*Within.*] Take care of the gentlemen's horses there; see them well rubbed and littered.

Trap. Just alighted! if they do but stay to eat now! Impudence assist me. Ha! a couple of pretty young sparks, faith!

Enter HYPOLITA *and* FLORA *in men's habits; a Servant with a portmanteau.*

Trap. Welcome to Madrid, sir; welcome, sir!

Flo. Sir, your servant!

Serv. Have the horses pleased your honour?

Hyp. Very well indeed, friend. Pr'ythee, set down the portmanteau, and see that the poor creatures want nothing: they have performed well, and deserve our care.

Trap. I'll take care of that, sir. Here, ostler!

[*Exeunt* TRAP. *and Servant.*

Flo. And pray, madam, what do I deserve, that have lost the use of my limbs to keep pace with you? 'Sheart! you whipped and spurred like a fox-hunter: it's a sign you had a lover in view: I'm sure my shoulders ache as if I had carried my horse on them.

Hyp. Poor Flora! thou art fatigued indeed! but I shall find a way to thank thee for't.

Flo. Thank me, quotha! Egad, I sha'n't be able to sit this fortnight. Well, I'm glad our journey's at an end, however; and now, madam, pray, what do you propose will be the end of our journey?

Hyp. Why, now, I hope the end of my wishes—Don Philip, I need not tell you how far he is in my heart.

Flo. No, your sweet usage of him told me that long enough ago; but now, it seems, you think fit to confess it: and what is it you love him for, pray?

Hyp. His manner of bearing that usage.

Flo. Ah, dear pride! how we love to have it tickled! But he does not bear it, you see, for he's coming post to Madrid to marry another woman; nay, one he never saw.

Hyp. An unknown face cannot have very far engaged him.

Flo. How came he to be engaged to her at all?

Hyp. Why, I engaged him.

Flo. To another!

Hyp. To my whole sex, rather than own I loved him.

Flo. Ah, done like a woman of courage!

Hyp. I could not bear the thought of parting with my power; besides, he took me at such an advantage, and pressed me so home to a surrender, I could have torn him piece-meal.

Flo. Ay, I warrant you, an insolent—agreeable puppy. Well, but to leave impertinence, madam, pray how came you to squabble with him?

Hyp. I'll tell thee, Flora:—You know Don Philip wants no charms that can recommend a lover; in birth and quality, I confess him my superior; and it is the thought of that has been a constant thorn upon my wishes. I never saw him in the humblest posture, but still I fancied he secretly presumed his rank and fortune might deserve me. This always stung my pride, and made me overact it: nay, sometimes, when his sufferings have almost drawn tears into my eyes, I have turned the subject with some trivial talk, or hummed a spiteful tune, though I believe his heart was breaking.

Flo. A very tender principle, truly!

Hyp. Well, I don't know, it was in my nature. But to proceed—This, and worse usage, continued a long time; at last, despairing of my heart, he then resolved to do a violence on his own, by consenting to his father's commands of marrying a lady of considerable fortune here in Madrid.—The match is concluded, articles are sealed, and the day is fixed for his journey. Now, the night before he set out, he came to take his leave of me, in hopes, I suppose, I would have staid him. I need not tell you my confusion at the news; and though I could have given my soul to have deferred it, yet, finding him, unless I bade him stay, resolved upon the marriage, I (from the pure spirit of contradiction) swore to myself I would not bid him do it; so called for my veil, and told him I was in haste, begged his pardon, your servant, and so whipped to prayers.

Flo. Well said again! that was a clincher.—Ah, had not you better been at confession?

Hyp. Why, really, I might have saved a long journey by it. To be short, when I came from church, Don Philip had left this letter at home for me, without requiring an answer——Read it——

Flo. [*Reads.*] "Your usage has made me justly despair of you, and now, any change must better

my condition: at least it has reduced me to the necessity of trying the last remedy,—marriage with another; if it prove ineffectual, I only wish you may, at some hours, remember how little cause I have given you to have made me for ever miserable. PHILIP."

Poor gentleman! very hard, by my conscience! Indeed, madam, this was carrying the jest a little too far.

Hyp. Ah, by many a long mile, Flora; but what would you have a woman do, when her hand's in?

Flo. Nay, the truth of it is, we never know the difference between enough and a surfeit; but, love be praised, your proud stomach's come down for it.

Hyp. Indeed, it is not altogether so high as it was. In a word, his last letter set me at my wit's end; and when I came to myself, you may remember you thought me bewitched; for I immediately called for my boots and breeches, a straddle we got, and so rode after him.

Flo. Why, truly, madam, as to your wits, I have not much altered my opinion of them, for I cannot see what you propose by it.

Hyp. My whole design, Flora, lies in this portmanteau and these breeches.

Flo. A notable design, no doubt! but, pray, let's hear it?

Hyp. Why, I do propose to be twice married between them.

Flo. How! twice?

Hyp. By the help of the portmanteau, I intend to marry myself to Don Philip's new mistress; and then——I'll put off my breeches and marry him.

Flo. Now, I begin to take ye: but, pray, what's in the portmanteau, and how came you by it?

Hyp. I hired one to steal it from his servant at the last inn we lay at in Toledo. In it are jewels of value, presents to my bride, gold good store, settlements, and credential letters, to certify, that the bearer (which I intend to be myself) is Don Philip, only son and heir of Don Fernando de las Torres, now residing at Seville, whence we came.

Flo. A very smart undertaking, by my troth! And, pray, madam, what part am I to act?

Hyp. My woman still; when I cannot lie for myself, you are to do it for me, in the person of a cousin-german.

Flo. And my name is to be——

Hyp. Don Guzman, Diego, Mendoza, or what you please: be your own godfather.

Flo. 'Egad, I begin to like it mightily! this may prove a very pleasant adventure, if we can but come off without fighting, which, by the way, I don't easily perceive we shall; for, to be sure, Don Philip will make the devil to do with us when he finds himself here before he comes hither.

Hyp. Oh, let me alone to give him satisfaction.

Flo. I'm afraid it must be alone, if you do give him satisfaction; for my part, I can push no more than I can swim.

Hyp. But can you bully upon occasion?

Flo. I can scold, when my blood's up.

Hyp. That's the same thing: bullying would be scolding in petticoats.

Flo. Say ye so? Why, then, Don, look to yourself; if I don't give you as good as you bring, I'll be content to wear breeches as long as I live, though I lose the end of my sex by it. But, madam, now you have opened the plot, pray, when is the play to begin?

Hyp. I hope to have it all over in less than four hours: we'll just refresh ourselves with what the house affords, comb out our wigs, and wait upon my father-in-law——How now! what would this fellow have?——

Enter TRAPPANTI.

Trap. Servant, gentlemen; I have taken care of your nags; good cattle they are, by my troth! right and sound, I warrant them; they deserve care, and they have had it, and shall have it, if they stay in this house. I always stand by, sir; see them rubbed down with my own eyes—Catch me trusting an ostler—I'll give you leave to fill for me, and drink for me too.

Flo. I have seen this fellow somewhere.

Trap. Hey-day! what, no cloth laid? no ever such attendance! Hey, house! tapster! landlord! hey! [*Knocks.*] What was it you he spoke, gentlemen?

Hyp. Really, sir, I ask your pardon; I have almost forgot you.

Trap. Pshaw! dear sir, never talk of it; I live here hard by—I have a lodging——I cannot call it a lodging neither—that is, I have a—Sometimes I am here, and sometimes I am there, and so, here and there, one makes shift, you know. Hey! will these people never come? [*Knocks.*

Hyp. You give a very good account of yourself, sir.

Trap. Oh, nothing at all, sir. Lord, sir—was it fish or flesh, sir?

Flo. Really, sir, we have bespoke nothing yet.

Trap. Nothing! for shame! it's a sign you are young travellers. You don't know this house, sir; why, they'll let you starve if you don't stir and call, and that like thunder, too——Hey! [*Knocks.*

Hyp. Ha! you eat here sometimes, I presume, sir?

Trap. Umph! Ay, sir, that's as it happens—I seldom eat at home, indeed—things are generally, you know, so out of order there, that—Did you hear any fresh news upon the road, sir?

Hyp. Only, sir, that the king of France lost a great horse-match upon the Alps t'other day.

Trap. Ha! a very odd place for a horse-race—but the king of France may do any thing—did you come that way, gentlemen? or—Hey! [*Knocks.*

Enter Host.

Host. Did you call, gentlemen?

Trap. Yes, and bawl, too, sir. Here, the gentlemen are almost famished, and nobody comes near them. What have you in the house, now, that will be ready presently?

Host. You may have what you please, sir.

Hyp. Can you give us a partridge?

Host. Sir, we have no partridges; but we'll get you what you please in a moment. We have a very good neck of mutton, sir; if you please, it shall be clapped down in a moment.

Hyp. Have you no pigeons or chickens?

Host. Truly, sir, we have no fowl in the house at present; if you please, you may have any thing else in a moment.

Hyp. Then, pr'ythee, get us some young rabbits.

Host. Upon my word, sir, rabbits are so scarce, they are not to be had for money.

Flo. Have you any fish?

Host. Fish, sir! I drest yesterday the finest dish that ever came upon a table; I am sorry we have none left, sir; but, if you please, you may have any thing else in a moment.

Trap. Pox on thee! hast thou nothing but any thing else in the house?

Host. Very good mutton, sir.

Hyp. Pr'ythee get us a breast then.

Host. Breast! don't you love the neck, sir?

Hyp. Have ye nothing in the house but the neck?

Host. Really, sir, we don't use to be so unprovided; but at present we have nothing else left.

Trap. Faith, sir, I don't know but a nothing else may be very good meat, when any thing else is not to be had.

Hyp. Then, pr'ythee, friend, let's have thy neck of mutton before that is gone, too.

Trap. Sir, he shall lay it down this minute; I'll see it done, gentlemen; I'll wait upon ye presently; for a minute I must beg you pardon, and leave to lay the cloth myself.

Hyp. By no means, sir.

Trap. No ceremony, dear sir! Indeed I'll do it. [*Exeunt Host and* TRAPPANTI.

Hyp. What can this familiar puppy be?

Flo. With much ado, I have recollected his face. Don't you remember, madam, about two or three years ago, Don Philip had a trusty servant, called Trappanti, that used now and then to slip a note into your hand as you came from church?

Hyp. Is this he, that Philip turned away for saying I was as proud as a beauty, and homely enough to be good-humoured?

Flo. The very same, I assure ye; only, as you see, starving has altered his air a little.

Hyp. Poor fellow! I am concerned for him. What makes him so far from Seville?

Flo. I am afraid all places are alike to him.

Hyp. I have a great mind to take him into my service; his assurance may be useful, as my case stands.

Flo. You would not tell him who you are?

Hyp. There's no occasion for it——I'll talk with him.

Enter TRAPPANTI.

Trap. Your dinner's upon the spit, gentlemen, and the cloth is laid in the best room—Are you not for a whet, sir? What wine? what wine? hey!

Flo. We give you trouble, sir.

Trap. Not in the least, sir—Hey! [*Knocks.*

Enter Host.

Host. D'ye call, gentlemen?

Hyp. Ay; what wine have ye?

Host. What sort you please, sir.

Flo. Sir, will you please to name it? [*To* TRAP.

Trap. Nay, pray, sir!

Hyp. No ceremony, dear sir! upon my word you shall.

Trap. Upon my soul you'll make me leave ye, gentlemen.

Hyp. Come, come, no words: pr'ythee, you shall.

Trap. Psha! but why this among friends, now? Here—have ye any right Galicia?

Host. The best in Spain, I warrant it.

Trap. Let's taste it; if it be good, set us out half a dozen bottles for dinner.

Host. Yes, sir. [*Exit Host.*

Flo. Who says this fellow's a-starving now? On my conscience, the rogue has more impudence than a lover at midnight.

Hyp. Hang him, 'tis inoffensive; I'll humour him——Pray, sir, (for I find we are like to be better acquainted, therefore, I hope you won't take my question ill)——

Trap. Oh, dear sir!

Hyp. What profession may you be of?

Trap. Profession, sir—I—I—'Ods me! here's wine.

Enter Host.

Come, fill out—hold—let me taste it first—Ye blockhead, would you have the gentleman drink before he knows whether it be good or not? [*Drinks.*] Yes, 'twill do—Give me the bottle, I'll fill myself. Now, sir, is not that a glass of right wine?

Hyp. Extremely good, indeed——But, sir, as to my question.

Trap. I'm afraid, sir, that mutton won't be enough for us all.

Hyp. Oh, pray, sir, bespeak what you please.

Trap. Sir, your most humble servant—Here, master! pr'ythee, get us a—ha! ay, get us a dozen of poached eggs—a dozen, d'ye hear—just to—pop down a little.

Host. Yes, sir. [*Going.*

Trap. Friend—let there be a little slice of bacon to every one of them.

Hyp. But, sir——

Trap. 'Odso! I had like to have forgot——

here a—Sancho, Sancho! Ay, is not your name Sancho?

Host. Diego, sir.

Trap. Oh, ay, Diego; that's true, indeed, Diego. Umph!

Hyp. I must e'en let him alone; there's no putting in a word till his mouth's full.

Trap. Come, here's to thee, Diego—[*Drinks and fills again.*] That I should forget thy name, though.

Host. No great harm, sir.

Trap. Diego, ha! a very pretty name, faith—I think you are married, are you not, Diego?

Host. Ay, ay, sir.

Trap. Ha! how many children?

Host. Nine girls and a boy, sir.

Trap. Ha! nine girls!—Come, here's to thee again, Diego——Nine girls! a stirring woman, I dare say; a good housewife, ha, Diego?

Host. Pretty well, sir.

Trap. Makes all her pickles herself, I warrant ye——Does she do olives well?

Host. Will you be pleased to taste them, sir?

Trap. Taste them! hum! pr'ythee, let's have a plate, Diego.

Host. Yes, sir.

Hyp. And our dinner as soon as you please, sir: when it's ready, call us.

Host. Yes, sir. [*Exit Host.*

Hyp. But, sir, I was asking you of your profession.

Trap. Profession! really, sir, I don't use to profess much: I am a plain-dealing sort of a man; if I say I'll serve a gentleman, he may depend upon me.

Flo. Have you ever served, sir?

Trap. Not these two last campaigns.

Hyp. How so?

Trap. Some words with my superior officer; I was a little too free in speaking my mind to him.

Hyp. Don't you think of serving again, sir?

Trap. If a good post fall in my way.

Hyp. I believe I could help you—Pray, sir, when you served last, did you take pay or wages?

Trap. Pay, sir!——Yes, sir, I was paid, cleared, subsistence and arrears, to a farthing.

Hyp. And your late commander's name was—

Trap. Don Philip de las Torres.

Hyp. Of Seville?

Trap. Of Seville.

Hyp. Sir, your most humble servant. You need not be curious, for I am sure you don't know me, though I do you, and your condition, which, I dare promise you, I'll mend upon our better acquaintance: and your first step to deserve it, is to answer me honestly to a few questions. Keep your assurance still: it may do me service; I shall like you better for it. Come, here's to encourage you. [*Gives him money.*

Trap. Sir, my humble service to you.

Hyp. Well said.

Flo. Nay, I'll pass my word he sha'n't dwindle into modesty.

Trap. I never heard a gentleman talk better in my life. I have seen such a sort of a face before; but where——I don't know, nor I don't care. It's your glass, sir.

Hyp. Grammercy! here, cousin. [*Drinks to* FLORA.] Come now, what made Don Philip turn you out of his service? why did you leave him?

Trap. 'Twas time, I think; his wits had left him—the man was mad.

Hyp. Mad!

Trap. Ay, stark mad——in love.

Hyp. In love! how, pray?

Trap. Very deep—up to the ears—over head——drowned by this time—he would in—I would have had him stopped when he was up to the middle.

Hyp. What was she he was in love with?

Trap. The devil.

Hyp. So, now for a very ugly likeness of my own face. [*Aside.*] What sort of a devil?

Trap. The damning sort——a woman.

Hyp. Had she no name?

Trap. Her christian name was Donna Hippolita, but her proper name was Shuttlecock.

Flo. How dy'e like that? [*Aside to* HYP.

Hyp. Pretty well. [*Aside to* FLO.] Was she handsome?

Trap. Umph——so, so.

Flo. How d'ye like that? [*To* HYP.

Hyp. Umph——so, so. [*To* FLO.] Has she wit?

Trap. Sometimes.

Hyp. Good humour?

Trap. Very seldom.

Hyp. Proud?

Trap. Ever.

Hyp. Was she honest?

Trap. Very proud.

Hyp. What, had she no good qualities?

Trap. Faith, I don't remember them.

Hyp. Ha! dy'e think she loved him?

Trap. If she did, 'twas as the cobler loved his wife.

Hyp. How's that?

Trap. Why, he beat her thrice a-day, and to his neighbours he loved her ne'er the worse, tho' he was resolved she should never know it.

Hyp. Did she use him so very ill?

Trap. Like a jade.

Flo. How d'ye do now? [*To* HYP.

Hyp. I don't know—methinks, I—But hark'ee, what, was she not handsome, say ye?

Trap. A devilish tongue.

Hyp. Was she ugly?

Flo. Ay, say that at your peril. [*Aside.*

Hyp. What was she? how did she look?

Trap. Look! why, faith, the woman looked very well when she had a blush in her face.

Hyp. Did she often blush?

Trap. I never saw her.

Hyp. Never saw her! had she no charms, what made him love her?

Trap. Really I cann't tell.

Flo. How d'ye like the picture, madam? [*Aside.*

Hyp. Oh, oh, extremely well! the rogue has put me into a cold sweat. I am as humble as an offending lover.

Enter Host.

Host. Gentlemen, your dinner's upon the table. [*Exit Host.*

Hyp. That's well. Come, sir; at dinner I'll give you farther instructions how you may serve yourself and me.

Trap. Come, sir. [*To* FLORA.

Flo. Nay, dear sir! no ceremony.

Trap. Sir, your very humble servant.

[*As they are going,* HYP. *stops them.*

Hyp. Come back; here's one I don't care should see me.

Trap. Sir, the dinner will be cold.

Hyp. Do you eat it hot, then; we are not hungry.

Trap. Sir, your very humble servant again. [*Exit* TRAP.

Flo. You seem concerned; who is it?

Hyp. My brother Octavio, as I live!—Come this way. [*They retire.*

Enter OCTAVIO *and a Servant.*

Oct. Jasper, run immediately to Rosara's woman; tell her I am just come to town; slip that note into her hand, and stay for an answer.

Flo. 'Tis he!

Re-enter Host, conducting Don PHILIP.

Host. Here, sir, please to walk this way.

Flo. And Don Philip, by Jupiter!

D. Phi. When my servant comes, send him to me immediately.

Host. Yes, sir.

Hyp. Nay, then, it is time for us to make ready—*Allons!* [*Exeunt* HYP. *and* FLO.

Oct Don Philip!

D. Phi. Dear Octavio!

Oct. What lucky point of the compass could blow us to one another so?

D. Phi. Faith, a wind very contrary to my inclination; but the worst, I see, blows some good. I am overjoyed to see you. But what makes you so far from the army?

Oct. Who thought to have found you so far from Seville!

D. Phi. What do you do at Madrid?

Oct. Oh, friend, such an unfortunate occasion, and yet such a lucky discovery! such a mixture of joy and torment, no poor dog upon earth was ever plagued with.

D. Phi Unriddle, pray.

Oct. Don't you remember, about six months ago, I wrote you word of a dear, delicious, sprightly creature, that I had bombarded for a whole summer to no purpose?

D. Phi. I remember.

Oct. That same silly, stubborn, charming angel now capitulates.

D. Phi. Then she's taken.

Oct. I cann't tell that; for you must know, her perfidious father, contrary to his treaty with me, and her inclination, is going to——

D. Phi. Marry her to another——

Oct. Of a better estate than mine, it seems. She tells me here, he's within a day's march of her; begs me to come upon the spur to her relief; and, if I don't arrive too late, confesses she loves me well enough to open the gates, and let me enter the town before him. There's her express, read it——

HYPOLITA, FLORA, *and* TRAPPANTI *appear in the Balcony.*

Hyp. Hark! they are talking of a mistress—let us observe.

Flo. Trappanti, there's your old master.

Trap. Ay, I know him again; but I may chance to tell him, he did not know a good servant when he had him.

D Phi. [*Reads.*] "My father has concluded a match for me with one I never saw, and intends, in two days, to perfect it: the gentleman is expected every hour. In the mean time, if you know any friend that has a better title to me, advise him forthwith to put in his claim. I am almost out of my senses, which you will easily believe when I tell you, if such a one should make haste, I sha'n't have time to refuse him any thing."

Hyp. How is this?

D. Phi. No name?

Oct. She never would trust it in a letter.

Flo. If this should be Don Philip's mistress?

Trap. Sir, you may take my word it is: I know the lady, and what the neighbours say of her.

Hyp. This was a lucky discovery—but hush.

D. Phi. What will you do in this case?

Oct. That I don't yet know: I am half distracted; I have just sent my servant to tell her I am come to town, and beg an opportunity to speak with her; I long to see her; I warrant the poor fool will be so soft and so humble, now she's in a fright.

D. Phi. What will you purpose at your meeting her?

Oct. I don't know; may be another meeting; at least it will come to a kind look, a kiss, good bye, and a sigh—Ah, if I can but persuade her to run away with me!

D. Phi. Consider——

Oct. Ah, so I do! What pleasure 'twould be, to have her steal out of her bed in a sweet moonshiny night; to hear her come pat, pat, pat, along in her slippers, with nothing but a thin silk night-gown loose about her, and in this tempting dress, to have her jump into my arms, breathless with fear; her panting bosom close to mine; then to stifle her with kisses, and curl myself about her smooth warm limbs, that breathe an healing odour from their pores, enough to make the senses ache, or fancy mad!

D. Phi. Octavio, I envy thee; thou art the happiest man in thy temper—

Oct. And thou art the most altered I ever

knew. Pr'ythee, what makes thee so much upon the humdrum? Well, are my sister and you come to a right understanding yet? When do you marry?

Hyp. So, now I shall have my picture by another hand.

D. Phi. My condition, Octavio, is very much like your mistress's; she is going to marry the man she never saw, and I the woman.

Oct. 'Sdeath, you make me tremble! I hope 'tis not my mistress.

D. Phi. Thy mistress! that were an idle fear; Madrid's a wide place—or, if it were, (she loving you) my friendship and my honour would oblige me to desist.

Oct. That's generous, indeed! but still you amaze me! Are you quite broke off with my sister? I hope she has given you no reason to forget her?

Hyp. Now, I tremble.

D. Phi. The most severe that ever beauty printed in the heart of man; a coldness unaccountable to sense.

Oct. Psha, dissembled!

Hyp. Ha!

D. Phi. I cann't think it; lovers are soon flattered into hope; but she appeared to me indifferent to so nice a point, that she has ruined me without the trouble of resolving it.

Flo. Well, men are fools.

Oct. And by this time she's in fits for your leaving her; 'tis her nature; I know her from her bib and baby: I remember, at five years old, the vixen has fasted three days together, in pure spite to her governess.

Hyp. So!

Oct. Nothing could ever, in appearance, make her pleased or angry; always too proud to be obliged, too high to be affronted, and thought nothing so low as to seem fond of revenge: she had a stomach that could digest every thing but humility.

Hyp. Good lack, Mr Wit!

Oct. Yet, with all this, I have sometimes seen her good-natured, generous, and tender.

Hyp. There the rogue was civil again.

D. Phi. I have thought so, too. [*Sighing.*

Hyp. How can he speak of me with so much generosity?

Oct. For all her usage of you, I'll be racked if she did not love you.

D. Phi. I rather think she hated me: however, now 'tis past, and I must endeavour to think no more of her.

Hyp. Now I begin to hate myself.

Oct. Then you are determined to marry this other lady?

D. Phi. That's my business to Madrid.

Trap. Which shall be done to your hand.

D. Phi. Besides, I am now obliged by contract.

Oct. Then, (though she be my sister) may some jealous, old, ill-natured dog, revenge your quarrel to her.

Hyp. Thank you, sir.

D. Phi. Come, forget it.

Hyp. Come, we have seen enough of the enemy's motions, to know 'tis time for us to decamp.

[*Exeunt* HYPOLITA, FLORA, *and* TRAPPANTI.

Oct. With all my heart; let's go in, and drink your new mistress's health. When do you visit her?

D. Phi I intended it immediately, but an unlucky accident hindered me: one of my servants fell sick upon the road, so that I am forced to make shift with one, and he is the most negligent sottish rogue in nature; he has left my portmanteau, where all my writings and letters of concern are, behind him at the last town we lay at, so that I cann't properly visit the lady, or her father, as I am able to assure them who I am.

Oct. Why don't you go back yourself to see for them?

D. Phi. I have sent my servant, for I am really tired: I was loth to appear so much concerned for them, lest the rascal should think it worth his while to run away with them.

Enter Servant to OCTAVIO.

Oct. How now?

Serv. Here's an answer, sir. [*Gives a letter.*

Oct. [*To D.* PHI.] My dear friend, I beg a thousand pardons; I must leave you this minute; the kind creature has sent for me. I am a soldier, you know, and orders must be obeyed; when I come off duty I'll immediately wait upon you.

D. Phi. You'll find me here, or hear of me. Adieu. Here, house! [*Exit* OCTAVIO.

Enter Host.

Pr'ythee, see if my servant be come yet.

Host. I believe he is, sir; is he not in blue?

D. Phi. Ay; where is the sot?

Host. Just refreshing himself with a glass at the gate.

D. Phi. Pray, tell the gentleman I'd speak with him.—[*Exit Host.*] In all the necessaries of life, there is not a greater plague than servants. Hey, Soto!

Enter SOTO, *drunk.*

Soto. Did you please to—uch!—call, sir?

D. Phi. What's the reason, blockhead, I must always wait upon you thus?

Soto. Sir, I did not know any thing of it. I—I—came as soon as you se—se—se—sent for me.

D. Phi. And why not without sending, sir? Did you think I expected no answer to the business I sent you about?

Soto. Yes, sir—I did think you would be willing—that is—to have an account—so, I staid to take a glass at the door because I would not be out of the way——huh!

D. Phi. You are drunk, rascal!——Where's the portmanteau!

Soto. Sir, I am here—if you please I'll give you the whole account how the matter is—huh!

D. Phi. My mind misgives me——speak, villain! [*Strikes him.*

Soto. I will, sir, as soon as I can put my words into an intelligible order: I ar'n't running away, sir.

D. Phi. To the point, sirrah.

Soto. Not of your sword, dear sir!

D. Phi. Sirrah, be brief, or I'll murder you: where's the portmanteau?

Soto. Sir, as I hope to breathe, I made all the strictest search in the world, and drank at every house upon the road going and coming, and asked about it; and so, at last, as I was coming within a mile of the town here, I found, then——

D. Phi. What?

Soto. That it must certainly be lost.

D. Phi. Dog! d'ye think this must satisfy me? [*Beats him.*

Soto. Lord, sir, you won't hear reason——Are you sure you ha'n't it about you?——If I know any thing of it I wish I may be burnt!

D. Phi. Villain! your life cann't make me satisfaction.

Soto. No, sir, that's hard—a man's life cann't—for my part—I—I—

D. Phi. Why do I vent my rage against a sot, a clod of earth? I should accuse myself for trusting him.

Soto. Sir—I had rather—bought a portmanteau out of my own pocket, than have had such a life about it.

D. Phi. Be dumb!

Soto. Ahuh! Yes.

D. Phi. If this rascal had stole it, sure he would not have ventured to come back again.—I am confounded! Neither Don Manuel nor his daughter know me, nor any of his family. If I should not visit him till I can receive fresh letters from my father, he'll in the mean time think himself affronted by my neglect.——What shall I do?—Suppose I go and tell him my misfortune, and beg his patience till we can hear again from Seville. I must think. Hey, sot! [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter HYPOLITA, FLORA, *and* TRAPPANTI.

Trap. Hold, sir; let me touch up your foretop a little.

Hyp. So! my gloves.—Well, Trappanti, you know your business, and if I marry the lady, you know my promise, too.

Trap. Sir, I shall remember them both——'Odso! I had like to have forgot—Here, house! a bason and wash-ball—I've a razor about me. Hey! [*Knocks.*

Hyp. What's the matter?

Trap. Sir, you are not shaved.

Hyp. Shaved!

Trap. Ever while you live, sir, go with a smooth chin to your mistress. Hey! [*Knocks.*

Hyp. This puppy does so plague me with his impertinence, I shall laugh out, and discover myself.

Trap. Why, Diego!

Hyp. Psha! pr'ythee don't stand fooling, we're in haste.

Flo. Ay, ay, shave another time.

Trap. Nay, what you please, sir: your beard is not much, you may wear it to-day. [*Taking her by the chin.*

Flo. Ay, and to-morrow too: pray, sir, will you see the coach ready, and put in the things?

Trap. Sir, I'll see the coach ready, and put in the things. [*Exit* TRAP.

Flo. Come, madam, courage! Now, let's do something for the honour of our sex, give a proof of our parts, and tell mankind we can contrive, fatigue, bustle, and bring about as well as the best of them.

Hyp. Well said, Flora! for the honour of our sex be it, then, and let the grave dons think themselves as wise as they please; but Nature knows there goes more wit to the management of some amours, than the hardest point in politics;

Therefore, to men the affair of state's confined.
Wisely to us the state of love's assigned,
As love's the weightier business of mankind.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Don* MANUEL'S *House.*

Enter ROSARA *and* VILETTA.

Vil. Hear reason.

Ros. Talk of Octavio, then.

Vil. How do you know but the gentleman your father designs you for, may prove as pretty a fellow as he? If you should happen to like him as well, would not that do your business as well?

Ros. Do you expect Octavio should thank you for this?

Vil. The gentleman is no fool.

Ros. He'll hate any one that is not a friend to his love.

Vil. Hang them, say I: but cann't one quench one's thirst without jumping into the river? Is there no difference between cooling and drowning? Octavio's now in a very good post——keep him there——I know the man; he understands the business he is in to a hair; but, faith, you'll spoil him; he's too pretty a fellow, and too poor a one, for a husband.

Ros. Poor! he has enough.

Vil. That's the most he has.

Ros. 'Twill do our business.

Vil. But when you have no portion (which I'm afraid you won't have with him) he'll soon have enough of you, and how will your business be done then, pray?

Ros. Psha! you talk like a fool.

Vil. Come, come, if Octavio must be the man, I say let Don Philip be the husband.

Ros. I tell you, fool, I'll have no man but an husband, and no husband but Octavio; when you find I am weary of him, I'll give you leave to talk to me of somebody else.

Vil. In vain, I see——I have done, madam—one must have time to be wise; but, in the mean while, what do you resolve? positively not to marry Don Philip?

Ros. I don't know what I shall do, till I see Octavio. When did he say he would be here?

Vil. Oh! I dare not tell you, madam.

Ros. Why?

Vil. I am bribed to the contrary.

Ros. By whom?

Vil. Octavio; he just now sent me this lovely piece of gold not to tell you what time he would be here.

Ros. Nay, then, Viletta, here are two pieces that are twice as lovely; tell me, when shall I see him?

Vil. Umph! these are lovely pieces, indeed. [*Smiling.*

Ros. When, Viletta?

Vil. Have you no more of them, madam?

Ros. Psha! There, take purse and all; will that content thee?

Vil Oh, dear madam! I should be unconscionable to desire more; but, really, I was willing to have them all first. [*Curtseying.*

Ros. When will he come?

Vil. Why, the poor gentleman has been hankering about the house this quarter of an hour; but I did not observe, madam, you were willing to see him till you had convinced me by so plain a proof.

Ros. Where's my father?

Vil. Fast asleep in the great chair.

Ros. Fetch him in then, before he wakes.

Vil. Let him wake, his habit will protect him.

Ros. His habit!

Vil. Ay, madam, he's turned friar to come at you: if your father surprises us, I have a lie ready to back him.——Hist, Octavio! you may enter.

Enter OCTAVIO, *in a friar's habit.*

Oct. After a thousand frights and fears, do I live to see my dear Rosara once again, and kind?

Ros. What shall we do, Octavio? [*Looking kindly on him.*

Oct. Kind creature! Do! why, as lovers should do; what nobody can undo; let's run away this minute, tie ourselves in the church-knot, and defy fathers and mothers.

Ros. And fortunes too?

Oct. Psha! we shall have it one day: they must leave their money behind them.

Ros. Suppose you first try my father's good-nature? You know he once encouraged your addresses.

Oct. First, let's be fast married: perhaps he may be good-natured when he cann't help it: if we should try him now, 'twill but set him more upon his guard against us: since we are listed under Love, don't let us serve in a separate garrison. Come, come, stand to your arms, whip a suit of night-clothes into your pocket, and let's march off in a body together.

Ros. Ah! my father!

Oct. Dead!

Vil. To your function.

Enter Don MANUEL.

D. Man. Viletta!

Vil. Sir.

D. Man. Where's my daughter?

Vil. Hist! don't disturb her.

D. Man. Disturb her! Why, what's the matter?

Vil. She's at confession, sir.

D. Man. Confession! I don't like that; a young woman ought to have no sins at all.

Vil. Ah! dear sir, there's no living without them.

D. Man. She's now at years of discretion.

Vil. There's the danger, sir; she's just of the tasting age: one has really no relish of a sin till fifteen.

D. Man. Ah! then, the jades have swinging stomachs. I find her aversion to the marriage I have proposed her has put her upon disobedient thoughts: there can be no confession without guilt.

Vil. Nor no pardon, sir, without confession.

D. Man Fiddle faddle! I won't have it seem wicked. Hussy, you shall confess for her; I'll have her send her sins by you: you know them, I'm sure; but I'll know what the friar has got out of her——Save you, father!

Oct. Bless you, son!

D. Man. How now? What's become of Father Benedict? Why is not he here?

Vil. Sir, he is not well; and so desired this gentleman, his brother here, to officiate for him.

D. Man. He seems very young for a confessor.

Vil. Ay, sir; he has not been long at it.

Oct. Nor don't desire to be long at it: I wish I may understand it well enough to make a fool of my old Don here. [*Aside.*

D. Man. Well, sir, how do you find the pulse of iniquity beat there? What sort of sin has she most stomach to?

Oct. Why, truly, sir, we have all frailties, and your daughter has had most powerful temptations.

D. Man. Nay, the devil has been very busy with her these two days.

Oct. She has told me a most lamentable story.

D. Man. Ten to one but this lamentable story proves a most damnable lie.

Oct. Indeed, son, I find, by her confession, that you are much to blame for your tyrannical government of her.

D. Man. Hey-day! What, has the jade been inventing sins for me, and confessing them instead of her own? Let me come—she shall be locked up till she repents them, too.

Oct. Son, forbear; this is now a corroboration of your guilt: this is inhuman.

D. Man. Sir, I have done; but pray, if you please, let's come to the point: What are these terrible cruelties that this tender lady accuses me of?

Oct. Nay, sir, mistake her not; she did not, with any malicious design, expose your faults, but, as her own depended on them, her frailties were the consequence of your cruelty.

D. Man. Let's have them both, antecedent and consequent.

Oct. Why, she confessed her first maiden innocent affection had long been settled upon a young gentleman, whose love to her you had once encouraged, and, after their most solemn vows of mutual faith, you have most barbarously broke in upon her hopes; and, to the utter ruin of her peace, contracted her to a man she never saw.

D. Man. Very good! I see no harm in all this.

Oct. Methinks the welfare of a daughter, sir, might be of weight enough to make you serious.

D. Man. Serious! so I am, sir. What a devil! must I needs be melancholy, because I have got her a good husband?

Oct. Her melancholy may tell you, sir, she cann't think him a good one.

D. Man. Sir, I understand thinking better than she, and I'll make her take my word.

Oct. What have you to object against the man she likes?

D. Man. The man I like.

Oct. Suppose the unhappy youth she loves should throw himself distracted at your feet, and try to melt you into pity—

D. Man. Ay! that if he can.

Oct. You would not, sir, refuse to hear him?

D. Man. Sir, I shall not refuse him any thing that I am sure will signify nothing.

Oct. Were you one moment to reflect upon the pangs which separated lovers feel—were Nature dead in you, that thought might wake her.

D. Man. Sir, when I am asked to do a thing I have not a mind to do, my nature sleeps like a top.

Oct. Then I must tell you, sir, this obstinacy obliges me, as a churchman, to put you in mind of your duty, and to let you know, too, you ought to pay more reverence to our order.

D. Man. Sir, I am not afraid of the sin of marrying my daughter to the best advantage; and so, if you please, father, you may walk home again—when any thing lies upon my conscience, I'll send for you.

Oct. Nay, then, 'tis time to claim a lover's right, and to tell you, sir, the man that dares to ask Rosara from me, is a villain.

[*Throws off his disguise.*

Vil. So, here will be fine work! [*Aside.*

D. Man. Octavio! the devil!

Oct. You'll find me one, unless you do me speedy justice: since not the bonds of honour, nature, nor submissive reason can oblige you, I am reduced to take a surer, shorter way, and force you to be just. I leave you, sir, to think on't. [*Walks about angrily.*

D. Man. Ah! here's a confessor! Ah! that jade of mine!—and that other jade of my jade's!—Here has been rare doings!—Well! it sha'n't hold long; madam shall be noosed to-morrow morning——Ha! sir's in a great passion here, but it won't do—those long strides, Don, will never bring you the sooner to your mistress.——Rosara! step into that closet, and fetch my spectacles off o' the table there. Tum! tum!

[*Sings.*

Vil. I don't like the old gentleman's looks.

[*Aside.*

Ros. This obstinacy of yours, my dear father, you shall find runs in the family.

[*Exit* ROSARA, *and* D. MAN. *locks her in.*

D. Man. Tum! dum! dum! [*Sings.*

Oct. Sir, I would advise you, as your nearest friend, to defer this marriage for three days.

D. Man. Tum! dum! dum!

Vil. Sir, you have locked my mistress in.

[*Pertly.*

D. Man. Tum! dum! dum!

Vil. If you please to lend me the key, sir, I'll let her out.

D. Man. Tum! dum! dum!

Oct. You might afford me at least, as I am a gentleman, a civil answer, sir.

D. Man. Why, then, in one word, sir, you shall not marry my daughter; and, as you are a gentleman, I'm sure you won't think it good manners to stay in my house, when I submissively beg of you to walk out.

Oct. You are the father of my mistress, and something, sir, too old to answer, as you ought, this wrong; therefore, I'll look for reparation where I can with honour take it; and, since you have obliged me to leave your house, I'll watch it carefully: I'll know who dares enter it. This sir, be sure of; the man that offers at Rosara's love, shall have one virtue, courage, at least; I'll be his proof of that, and ere he steps before me, force him to deserve her. [*Exit* OCT.

D. Man. Ah! poor fellow! he's mad now, and does not know what he would be at.—But, however, 'twill be no harm to provide against him—Who waits there?

Enter a Servant.

Run you for an alguazil, and bid your fellows arm themselves; I expect mischief at my door immediately; if Octavio offers any disturbance, knock him down, and bring him before me. [*Exit Serv.*

Vil. Hist! don't I hear my mistress's voice?

Ros. [*Within.*] Viletta!

Vil. Here, here, madam—Bless me! what's this? [VILETTA *listens at the closet door, and* ROSARA *thrusts a billet to her through the key-hole.*

Ha! a billet——to Octavio—a—hem.

[*Puts it into her bosom.*

D. Man. How now, hussy? What are you fumbling about that door for?

Vil. Nothing, sir; I was only peeping to see if my mistress had done prayers yet.

D. Man. Oh! she had as good let them alone; for she shall never come out till she has stomach enough to fall to upon the man I have provided for her. But hark you, Mrs Modesty, was it you, pray, that let in that able comforter for my babe of grace there?

Vil. Yes, sir; I let him in. [*Pertly.*

D. Man. Did you so? Ha! then, if you please, madam, I'll let you go out—go—go—get a sheet of brown paper, pack up your things, and let me never see that damned ugly face of thine as long as I live.

Vil. Bless me, sir! you are in a strange humour, that you won't know when a servant does as she should do.

D. Man. Thou art strangely impudent.

Vil. Only the farthest from it in the world, sir.

D. Man. Then I am strangely mistaken; didst not thou own just now thou lettest him in?

Vil. Yes—but 'twas in disguise—for I did not design you should see him, because I know you did not care my mistress should see him.

D. Man. Ha!

Vil. And I knew, at the same time, she had a mind to see him.

D. Man. Ha!

Vil. And you know, sir, that the sin of loving him had lain upon her conscience a great while; so I thought it high time she should come to a thorough confession.

D. Man. Ha!

Vil. So, upon this, sir, as you see—I—I—I let him in, that's all.

D. Man. Nay, if it be so as thou sayest, he was a proper confessor, indeed.

Vil. Ay, sir, for you know this was not a spiritual father's business.

D. Man. No, no; this matter was utterly carnal.

Vil. Well, sir, and judge you now if my mistress is not beholden to me?

D. Man. Oh! extremely; but you'll go to hell, my dear, for all this—though, perhaps, you'll chuse that place: I think you never much cared for your husband's company; and, if I don't mistake, you sent him to Heaven in the old road. Hark! what noise is that? [*Noise without.*

Vil. So, Octavio's pushing his fortune—he'll have a wife or a halter, that's positive—I'll go see. [*Exit* VILETTA.

Enter a Servant, hastily.

D. Man. How now?

Serv. O, sir, Octavio has set upon a couple of gentlemen just as they were alighting out of a coach at the door; one of them, I believe, is he that is to marry my young mistress; I heard them name her name; I'm afraid there will be mischief, sir: there they are, all at it, helter, skelter!

D. Man. Run into the hall, take down my back, breast, and head-piece; call an officer; raise the neighbours; give me my great gun; I'll shoot him out of the garret-window.

[*Exit Don* MANUEL.

Enter HYPOLITA *and* FLORA, *putting up their swords,* OCTAVIO *in the Alguazil's hands, and* TRAPPANTI.

Hyp. Bring him along—This is such an insolence! damn it! at this rate, no gentleman can walk the streets.

Flo. I suppose, sir, your business was more with our pockets than our persons. Are our things safe?

Trap. Ay, sir, I secured them as soon as ever I saw his sword out; I guessed his design, and scoured off with the portmanteau.

Hyp. I'll know now who set you on, sir.

Oct. Pr'ythee, young man, don't be troublesome; but thank the rascal, that knocked me down, for your escape.

Hyp. Sir, I'd have you know, if you had not been knocked down, I should have owed my escape to the same arm you would have owed the reward for your insolence. Pray, sir, what are you? who knows you?

Oct. I'm glad, at least, to find it is not Don Philip that's my rival. [*Aside.*

Serv. Sir, my master knows the gentleman very well; he belongs to the army.

Hyp. Then, sir, if you'd have me use you like a gentleman, I desire your meaning of those familiar questions you asked me at the coach-side.

Oct. Faith, young gentleman, I'll be very short: I love the lady you are to marry, and if you don't quit your pretences in two hours, it will entail perpetual danger upon you and your family.

Hyp. Sir, if you please, the danger's equal—for, rot me, if I am not as fond of cutting your throat, as you can be of mine!

Oct. If I were out of these gentlemen's hands on my word, sir, you should not want an opportunity.

Hyp. O, sir! these gentlemen shall protect neither of us; my friend and I will be your bail for them.

Flo. Ay, sir, we'll bail you; and, if you please, sir, bring your friend, I'm his. Damn me! what! d'ye think you have boys to deal with?

Oct. Sir, I ask your pardon, and shall desire to kiss your hands, about an hour hence, at—

[*Whispers.*

Flo. Very well, sir, we'll meet you.

Hyp. Release the gentleman.

Serv. Sir, we dare not, without my master's order. Here he is, sir.

Enter Don MANUEL.

D. Man. How now, bully confessor? What! in limbo?

Hyp. Sir, Don Ferdinando de las Torres, whom I am proud to call my father, commanded me to deliver this into the hands of his most dear and

worthy friend, Don Manuel Grimaldi, and, at the same time, gave me assurance of a kind reception.

D. Man. Sir, you are thrice welcome; let me embrace ye. I'm overjoyed to see you—Your friend, sir?

Hyp. Don Pedro Velada, my near relation, who has done me the honour of his company from Seville, sir, to assist at the solemnity of his friend's happiness.

D. Man. Sir, you are welcome; I shall be proud to know you.

Flo. You do me honour, sir.

D. Man. I hope you are not hurt, gentlemen?

Hyp. Not at all, sir; thanks to a little skill in the sword.

D. Man. I am glad of it; however, give me leave to interrupt our business for a moment, till I have done you justice on the person that offered you this insolence at the gate.

Hyp. Your pardon, sir; I understand he is a gentleman, and beg you would not let my honour suffer, by receiving a lame reparation from the law.

D. Man. A pretty mettled fellow, faith!—I must not let him fight though. [*Aside.*] But, sir, you don't know, perhaps, how deeply this man is your enemy.

Hyp. Sir, I know more of his spleen and folly than you imagine, which, if you please to discharge him, I'll acquaint you with.

D. Man. Discharge him! Pray consider, sir—

[*They seem to talk.*

Enter VILETTA, *and slips a note into* OCTAVIO'S *hand.*

Vil. Send your answer to me. [*Exit* VIL.

Oct. [*Aside.*] Now for a beam of hope in a tempest! [*Reads.*] "I charge you, don't hazard my ruin and your own, by the madness of a quarrel: the closet window, where I am, is but a step to the ground: be at the back-door of the garden exactly at the close of the evening, where you will certainly find one that may put you in the best way of getting rid of a rival." Dear, kind creature! Now if my little don's fit of honour does but hold out to bail me, I am the happiest dog in the universe.

D. Man. Well, sir, since I find your honour is dipt so deep in the matter—here—release the gentleman.

Flo. So, sir, you have your freedom; you may depend upon us.

Hyp. You will find us punctual.——Sir, your servant.

Oct. So, now, I have a very handsome occasion to put off the tilt, too. Gentlemen, I ask your pardon; I begin to be a little sensible of the rashness I committed; and, I confess, your manner of treating me has been so very much like men of honour, that I think myself obliged, from the same principle, to assure ye, that though I love Rosara equal to my life, yet no consideration shall persuade me to be a rude enemy, even to my rival I thank you for my freedom, and am your humble servant. [*Exit* OCT.

Hyp. Your servant, sir——I think we released my brother very handsomely; but I ha'n't done with him. [*Aside to* FLORA.

D. Man. What can this sudden turn of civility mean? I'm afraid 'tis but a cloak to some new roguery he has in his head.

Hyp. I don't know how old it may be, but my servant here has discovered a piece of villainy of his that exceeds any other he can be capable of.

D. Man. Is it possible? Why would you let him go, then?

Hyp. Because I'm sure he can do me no harm, sir.

D. Man. Pray, be plain, sir; what is it?

Hyp. This fellow can inform you—for, to say truth, he's much better at a lie. [*Aside.*

D. Man. Come hither, friend; pray, what is this business?

Hyp. Ay, what was that you overheard between Octavio and another gentleman at the inn where we alighted?

Trap. Why, sir, as I was unbuckling my portmanteau in the yard there, I observed Octavio and another spark very familiar with your honour's name; upon which, sir, I pricked up the ears of my curiosity, and took in all their discourse.

D. Man. Pray, who was that other spark, friend?

Trap. A brother rake, sir; a damned sly-looked fellow.

D. Man. So!

Flo. How familiarly the rogue treats his old master! [*Aside.*

Hyp. Poor Don Philip! [*Aside.*

Trap. Says one of them, says he, No, damn him, the old rogue (meaning you, sir) will never let you have her by fair means; however, says Octavio, I'll try soft words; but, if those won't do, bully him, says t'other.

D. Man. Ah, poor dog! but that would not do neither, sir; he has tried them both to-day to no purpose.

Trap. Say you so, sir? then you'll find what I say is all of a piece. Well, and if neither of these will do, says he, you must e'en tilt the young prig, your rival, (meaning you, then, sir.)

[*To* HYP.

D. Man. Ha, ha! that, I perceive, my spark did not greatly care for.

Trap. No, sir; that, he found, was catching a Tartar. 'Sbud! my master fought like a lion, sir.

Hyp. Truly, I did not spare him.

Flo. No, faith—after he was knocked down. [*Aside.*

Trap. But now, sir, comes the cream of the roguery.

Hyp. Pray observe, sir.

Trap. Well, says Slylooks, and if all these fail, I have a rare trick in my head, that will certainly defer the marriage for three or four days at least,

and, in that time, the devil's in't if you don't find an opportunity to run away with her.

D. Man. Would you so, Mr Dog? but he'll be hanged.

Hyp. O, sir, you'll find we were mighty fortunate in this discovery.

D. Man. Pray, sir, let's hear: what was this trick to be, friend?

Trap. Why, sir, to alarm you, that my master was an impostor, and that Slylooks was the true Don Philip, sent by his father, from Seville, to marry your daughter; upon which (says he) the old put (meaning you again, sir,) will be so bamboozled, that——

D. Man. But pray, sir, how did young Mr Coxcomb conclude that the old put was to believe all this? Had they no sham proofs that they proposed to bamboozle me with, as you call it?

Trap. You shall hear, sir; (the plot was pretty well laid, too;) I'll pretend, says he, that the rascal, your rival, (meaning you, then, sir,) has robbed me of my portmanteau, where I had put all my jewels, money, and letters of recommendation from my father: we are neither of us known in Madrid, says he, so that a little impudence, and a grave face, will certainly set those dogs a snarling, while you run away with the bone. That's all, sir.

D. Man. Impudent rogue!

Hyp. What think ye, sir? Was not this business pretty handsomely laid?

Flo. Faith, it might have wrought a very ridiculous consequence.

D. Man. Why, truly, if we had not been forearmed by this discovery, for aught I know, Mr Dog might have ran away with the bone indeed; but, if you please, sir, since these ingenious gentlemen are so pert upon the matter, we'll e'en let them see, that you and I have wit enough to do our business, and e'en clap up the wedding to-morrow morning.

Hyp. Sir, you are too obliging—but will your daughter, think ye, be prevailed with?

D. Man. Sir, I'll prepare her this minute—It's pity, methinks, we relieved this bully, tho'—

Hyp. Not at all, sir; I don't suppose he can have the impudence to pursue his design; or, if he should, sir—now we know him beforehand.

D. Man. Nay, that's true, as you say——but therefore, methinks, I'd have him come: I love mightily to laugh in my sleeve at an impudent rogue, when I'm sure he can do me no harm.—Udsflesh! if he comes, the dog sha'n't know whether I believe him or not—I'll try if the old put can bamboozle him or no.

Hyp. 'Egad, sir, you're in the right on't; knock him down with his own weapon.

Trap. And, when he's down, I have a trick to keep him so.

Flo. The devil's in it, if we don't maul this rascal among us.

D. Man. A son of a whore—I am sorry we let him go so soon, faith.

Flo. We might as well have held him a little.

Hyp. Really, sir, upon second thoughts, I wi we had—his excusing the challenge so ab makes me fancy he is in hopes of carrying point some other way—did not you observe yo daughter's woman whisper him?

D. Man. Humh!

Flo. They seem very busy, that's certain.

Hyp. I cannot say about what——but it wi be worth our while to be upon our guard.

D. Man. I am alarmed.

Hyp. Where is your daughter at this time?

D. Man. I think she's pretty safe—but I'll make her sure.

Flo. 'Twill be no harm to look about ye. Where's her woman?

D. Man. I'll be upon her presently—she shall be searched for intelligence—you'll excuse us gentlemen.

Hyp. Sir, the occasion presses you.

D. Man. If I find all safe, I'll return immediately; and then, if you please, we'll run over some old stories of my good friend Fernando. Your servant. [*Exit* Don MANU

Hyp. Sir, your most humble servant—Trappanti, thou art a rare fellow! thou hast a admirable face, and, when thou diest, I'll have a whole statue cast all in the same metal.

Flo. 'Twere pity the rogue was not bred to the law.

Trap. So 'tis, indeed, sir—a man should not praise himself; but if I had been bred to the gown, I dare venture to say I become it as well as any man that wears it.

Hyp. Nay, now, thou art modest—but, sir, we have more work for ye: you must get in to the servants, attack the lady's woman; there's ammunition, rogue!—[*Gives him m*——Now, try if you can make a breach into the secrets of the family.

Trap. Ah, sir, I warrant you—I could never yet meet with a woman that was this sort of a tol-proof—I have known a handful of these more than a barrel of gun-powder; the French charge all their cannon with them; the only weapon in the world, sir. I remember my old master's father used to say, the best thing in the Greek grammer was——*Argurios lonchaze chou kai panta crateseis.* [*Exit* TRAPPA

Hyp. Well, dear Flora, let me kiss thee: thou hast done thy part to a miracle.

Flo. 'Egad, I think so: didn't I bear up bravely? Now, if Don Philip should come when his blood's up, let him look to himself.

Hyp. We shall find him a little tough, I believe; for, poor gentleman! he is like to meet with a very odd reception from his father-in-law.

Flo. Nay, we have done his business there, I believe.

Hyp. How glibly the old gentleman swallowed Trappanti's lie!

Flo. And how rarely the rogue told it!

Hyp. And how soon it worked with him! for, if you please, says he, we'll let him see that we have wit enough to do our business, and clap up the wedding to-morrow morning.

Flo. Ah, we have it all the way——well, what ist we do next?

Hyp. Why, now for the lady—I'll be a little brisk upon her, and then——

Flo. Victoria! [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Continued.*

Enter VILETTA *hastily, Don* MANUEL, *and* TRAPPANTI *behind, observing her.*

Vil. So, with much ado, I have given the old n the slip; he has dangled with me through ry room in the house, high and low, up stairs l down, as close to my tail as a great boy han- ing after one of his mother's maids. Well— w we will see what monsieur Octavio says.

[*Takes a letter from her bosom.*

Trap. Hist! there she is, and alone. When devil has any thing to do with a woman, sir, t's his time to take her. Stand close.

D. Man. Ah, he's at work already—there's a er.

Trap. Leave her to me, sir; I'll read it.

Vil Ha, two pistoles! well, I'll say that for , the man knows his business; his letters al- 's come post-paid.

[*While she is reading,* TRAPPANTI *steals be- hind, and looks over her shoulder.*]

' Dear Viletta, convey the inclosed immediate- o your mistress, and, as you prize my life, use possible means to keep the old gentleman m the closet, till you are sure she is safe out the window. Your real friend."

Trap. Octavio. [*Reading.*

Vil Ah! [*Shrieking.*

Trap. Madam, your ladyship's most humble ant.

Vil. You're very impertinent, methinks, to look r other people's letters.

Trap. Why, I never read a letter in my life hout looking it over.

Vil. I don't know any business you had to look n this.

Trap. There's the thing——your not knowing , has put you into this passion.

Vil. You may chance to have your bones se, Mr Coxcomb.

Trap. Sweet honeycomb! don't be so wasp- ; or, if I keep your counsel, d'ye see, I don't w why my bones mayn't keep their places; if I peach, whose bones will pay for it, then?

Vil. Ha! the fool says true; I had better edle him. [*Aside.*

Trap. My dear queen! don't be frighted—I e as a friend; now, be serious.

Vil. Well, what would you have?

Trap. Don't you love money above any thing he world—except one?

Vil. I except nothing.

Trap. Very good—and pray, how many letters do you expect to be paid for when Octavio has married your mistress, and has no occasion to write to her? Look you, child, though you are of counsel for him, use him like a lawyer; make difficulties where there are none, that he may fee you where he needs not. Dispatch is out of practice; delay makes long bills: stick to it; once get him his cause, there's no more advice to be paid for.

Vil. What do you mean?

Trap. Why, that, for the same reason, I have no mind to put an end to my own fees by marrying my master: while they are lovers, they will always have occasion for a confidant and a pimp; but when they marry—*serviteur*—good night vails; our harvest is over. What d'ye think of me, now?

Vil. Why, I like what you say very well; but I don't know, my friend—to me that same face of yours looks like the title-page to a whole volume of roguery—what is it you drive at?

Trap. Money, money, money! Don't you let your mistress marry Octavio: I'll do my best to hinder my master. Let you and I lay our heads together to keep them asunder, and so make a penny of them all three.

Vil. Look you, seignior, I'll meet you half way, and confess to you I had made a rough draught of this project myself: but say I should agree with you to go on upon't, what security can you give me for performance of articles?

Trap. More than bond or judgment—my person in custody.

Vil. Ah, that won't do.

Trap. No, my love! why, there's many a sweet bit in it—taste it.

[*Offering to kiss her, she puts him away.*

Vil. No.

Trap. Faith, you must give me one.

Vil. Indeed, my friend, you are too ugly for me; though I am not handsome myself, I love to play with those that are.

Trap. And yet, methinks, an honest fellow, of my size and complexion, in a careless posture, playing the fool thus with his money——

[*Tosses a purse, she catches it, and he kisses her.*

Vil. Pshaw! Well, if I must come, then—— to see how a woman may be deceived at first sight of a man!

Trap. Nay, then, take a second thought of me, child. [*Again.*

D. Man. Ha! this is laying their heads together indeed! [*Behind.*

Vil. Well, now get you gone; I have a letter

to give to my mistress. Slip into the garden—I'll come t'ye presently.

Trap. Is't from Octavio?

Vil. Pshaw! begone, I say.

[*Snatches the letter.*

Trap. Hist!

[TRAPPANTI *beckons Don* MANUEL, *who goes softly behind*

Vil. Madam! madam! ha!

D. Man. Now, strumpet, give me the other letter, or I'll murder you. [*Draws.*

Vil. Ah lud! oh lud! there! [*Squeaking.*

D. Man. Now, we shall see what my gentleman would be at—[*Reads.*]—"My dear angel!"—Ha! soft and impudent!—"Depend upon me at the garden door, by seven this evening: pity my impatience, and believe you can never come too soon to the arms of your OCTAVIO." Ah! now would this rampant rogue make no more of debauching my gentlewoman, than the gentlewoman would of him, if he were to debauch her. Hold—let's see; what does he say here—um—um! [*Reads to himself.*

Vil. What a sot was I to believe this old fool durst do me any harm! but a fright's the devil. Would I had my letters again!—though 'tis no great matter: for, as my friend Trappanti says, delaying Octavio's business is doing my own.

D. Man. [*Reading.*] Um—um! sure she is safe out of the window. Oh, there the mine is to be sprung, then! The gentleman makes a warm siege on't, in troth, and, one would think, was in a fair way of carrying the place, while he has such an admirable spy in the middle of the town. Now, were I to act like a true Spaniard, I ought to rip up this jade for more intelligence; but I'll be wise; a bribe and a lie will do my business a great deal better. Now, gentlewoman, what do ye think, in your conscience, I ought to do to ye?

Vil. What I think in my conscience you'll not do to me—make a friend of me—you see, sir, I dare be an enemy.

D. Man. Nay, thou dost not want courage; I'll say that for thee; but is it possible any thing can make thee honest?

Vil. What do you suppose would make me otherwise?

D. Man. Money.

Vil. You have nicked it.

D. Man. And would the same sum make thee surely one as t'other?

Vil. That I cannot say, neither; one must be heavier than t'other, or else the scale cannot turn.

D. Man. Say it be so, would that turn thee into my interest?

Vil. The very minute you turn into mine, sir; judge yourself—here stands Octavio with a letter, and two pieces to give it to my mistress—there stand you with a hem! and four pieces—where would the letter go, d'ye think?

D. Man. There needs no more—I'm convinced, and will trust thee—there's to encourage thee before-hand, and, when thou bringest me a letter of Octavio's, I'll double the sum.

Vil. Sir, I'll do it—and will take care he shall write presently. [*Aside.*

D. Man. Now, as you expect I should believe you, begone, and take no notice of what I have discovered.

Vil. I am dumb, sir—— [*Exit* VILETTA.

D. Man. So, this was done like a wise general: and, now I have taken the counterscarp, there may be some hopes of making the town capitulate. Rosara! [*Unlocks the door.*

Enter ROSARA.

Ros. Did you call me, sir?

D. Man. Ay, child. Come, be cheerful: what I have to say to you, I'm sure ought to make you so.

Ros. He has certainly made some discovery—Viletta did not cry out for nothing—What shall I do—dissemble? [*Aside.*

D. Man. In one word, set your heart at rest, for you shall marry Don Philip this very evening.

Ros. That's but short warning for the gentleman, as well as myself; for I don't know that we ever saw one another. How are you sure I will like me?

D. Man. Oh, as for that matter, he shall see you presently; and I have made it his interest to like you—but if you are still positively resolved upon Octavia, I'll make but few words—pack your clothes, and go to him.

Ros. My clothes, sir!

D. Man. Ay, for the gentleman sha'n't stay a rag with you.

Ros. I am not in haste to be starved, sir.

D. Man. Then let me see you put on your best airs, and receive Don Philip as you should do.

Ros. When do you expect him, sir?

D. Man. Expect him, sir!—he has been here this hour—I only staid to get you out of the sullens——He's none of your hum-drums—all life and mettle! 'Odszooks, he has the courage of a cock! a duel's but a dance to him; he has been at sa! sa!—sa! for you already.

Ros. Well, sir, I sha'n't be afraid of his courage, since I see you are resolved he shall be the man—He shall find me a woman, sir; let him win me and wear me as soon as you please.

D. Man. Ah, now, thou art my own girl! hold but in this humour one quarter of an hour, and I'll toss the t'other bushel of doubloons into thy portion——Here, bid a—Come, I'll fetch him myself—She's in a rare cue i'faith! ah if he does but nick her now! [*Exit Don* MAN.

Ros. Now, I have but one card to play——that don't hit, my hopes are crushed indeed; if this young spark be not a downright coxcomb, I may have a trick to turn all yet——Dear fortune! give him but common sense, I'll make it impossible for him to like me—Here they come—

[*Walks carelessly, and sings*

I'll rove and I'll range——

Enter Don MANUEL *and* HYPOLITA.

Hyp. *I'll love and I'll change*—[Sings with her.

D. Man. Ah, he has her, he has her!
Hyp. Madam, I kiss your ladyship's hands; I , by your gaiety, you are no stranger to my iness. Perhaps you expected I should have ıe in, with a grave bow and a long speech; my affairs are in a little more haste; there-, if you please, madam, we'll cut the work rt; be thoroughly intimate at the first sight, see one another's humours in a quarter of hour, as well as if we had been weary of them twelvemonth.
D. Man. Ah!
Ros. Troth, sir, I think you are very much in right. The sooner I see you, the sooner I ll know whether I like you or not.
Hyp. Psha! as for that matter, you'll find me ery fashionable husband: I sha'n't expect my e to be very fond of me.
Ros. But I love to be in the fashion too, sir, aking the man I have a mind to.
Hyp. Say you so? why, then, take me as soon you please.
Ros. I only stay for my mind, sir; as soon as r that comes to me, upon my word I'm ready wait upon you.
Hyp. Well, madam, a quarter of an hour shall ak no squares——Sir, if you'll find an occa- n to leave us alone, I see we shall come to a nt understanding presently.
D. Man. I'll do it, sir. Well, child, speak in conscience, is not he a pretty fellow?
Ros. The gentleman's very well, sir; but me- nks, he is a little too young for a husband.
D. Man. Young! a fiddle! you'll find him old ough for a wife, I warrant ye. Sir, I must beg ır pardon for a moment; but if you please, the mean time, I'll leave you my daughter, I so pray make your best of her.

[*Exit Don* MANUEL.

Hyp. I thank ye, sir. [HYPOLITA *stands some ne mute, looks carelessly at* ROSARA, *and she ides as in contempt of him.*] Why, now, me- nks, madam, you had as good put on a real ile, for I am doomed to be the happy man, ı see.
Ros. So my father says, sir.
Hyp. I'll take his word.
Ros. A bold man——but he'll break it.
Hyp. He won't.
Ros. He must.
Hyp. Whether he will or no?
Ros. He cann't help it now.
Hyp. How so, pray?
Ros. Because he has promised you, you shall rry me; and he has always promised me, I uld marry the man I could love.
Hyp. Ay—that is, he would oblige you to love man you should marry.
Ros. The man that I marry will be sure of my e; but for the man that marries me——mer- on him!
Hyp. No matter for that; I'll marry you.
Ros. Come, I don't believe you are so ill-natu- l.
Hyp. Why, dost thou not like me, child?
Ros. Um——No.
Hyp. What's the matter?
Ros. The old fault.
Hyp. What?
Ros. I don't like you.
Hyp. Is that all?
Ros. No.
Hyp. That's hard——the rest?
Ros. That you won't like.
Hyp. I'll stand it——try me.
Ros. Why, then, in short, I like another!—Another man, sir, has got into my head, and has made such work there, you'll never be able to set me to rights as long as you live—What d'ye think of me now, sir? Won't this serve for a reason why you should not marry me?
Hyp. Um—the reason is a pretty smart sort of a reason, truly; but it won't do—To be short with ye, madam, I have reason to believe I shall be disinherited if I don't marry you.
Ros. And what have you reason to believe you shall be if you do marry me?
Hyp. In the Spanish fashion, I suppose, jealous to a degree.
Ros. You may be in the English fashion, and something else to a degree.
Hyp. Oh, if I have not courage enough to prevent that, madam, let the world think me, in the English city fashion, content to a degree. Now, here in Spain, child, we have such things as back rooms, barred windows, hard fare, poison, daggers, bolts, chains, and so forth.
Ros. Ay, sir; and there are such things as bribes, plots, shams, letters, lies, walls, ladders, keys, confidants, and so forth.
Hyp. Hey! a very complete regiment indeed! What a world of service might these do in a quarter of an hour, with a woman's courage at the head of them! Really, madam, your dress and humour have the prettiest loose French air, something so quality, that, let me die, madam, I believe in a month I should be apt to poison ye.
Ros. So, it takes! [*Aside.*]—And, let me die, sir, I believe I should be apt to deserve it of ye.
Hyp. I shall certainly do it.
Ros. It must be in my breakfast, then——for I should certainly run away before the wedding-dinner came up.
Hyp. That's over-acted; but I'll startle her. [*Aside.*]—Then I must tell you, madam, a Spanish husband may be provoked as well as a wife.
Ros. My life on't, his revenge is not half so sweet! and if she's provoked, 'tis a thousand to one but she licks her lips before she's nailed in her coffin!
Hyp. You are very gay, madam.
Ros. I see nothing to fright me, sir; for I cannot believe you'll marry me now——I have told you my humour: if you like it, you have a good stomach.
Hyp. Why, truly, you may probably lie a little heavy upon it, but I can better digest you than poverty: As for your incumbration, I'll keep your body honest, however: that shall be locked up; and if you don't love me, then—I'll stab you.

Ros. With what? your words? It must be those you say after the priest, then—You'll be able to do very little that will reach my heart, I assure ye.

Hyp. Well, well, madam, you need not give yourself half this trouble; I am heartily convinced you will make the damned'st wife that ever poor dog of a husband wished at the devil: but really, madam, you are very unfortunate; for, notwithstanding all the mighty pains you have taken, you have met with a positive coxcomb, that's still just fool and stout enough to marry you.

Ros. 'Twill be a proof of your courage, indeed.

Hyp. Madam, you rally very well, 'tis confessed; but now, if you please, we'll be a little serious.

Ros. I think I am.—What does he mean? [*Aside.*

Hyp. Come, come, this humour is as much affected as my own: I could no more bear the qualities you say you have, than I know you are guilty of them: your pretty arts, in striving to avoid, have charmed me. Had you been precisely coy, or over-modest, your virtue, then, might have been suspected: your shewing me what a man of sense should hate, convinces me you know, too, what he ought to love; and she, that's once so well acquainted with the charms of virtue, never can forsake it. I both admire and love you now; you have made, what only was my interest, my happiness. At my first view, I woo'd you only to secure a sordid fortune, which now I, overjoyed, could part with, nay, with my life, with any thing, to purchase your unrivalled heart.

Ros. Now I am plunged indeed! [*Aside.*]—Well, sir, I own you have discovered me; and, since you have obliged me to be serious, I now, from my sincerity, protest my heart's already given, from whence no power nor interest shall recall it.

Hyp. I hate my interest, and would owe no power or title, but to love.

Ros. If, as you say, you think I find a charm in virtue, you'll know, too, there's a charm in constancy. You ought to scorn me, should I flatter you with hope, since now you are assured I must be false before I can be yours. If what I have said seems cold, or too neglectful of your merit, call it not ingratitude or scorn, but faith unmoved, and justice to the man I love.

Hyp. Death! I have fooled away my hopes: she must consent, and soon, or yet I'm lost. [*Aside.*

Ros. He seems a little thoughtful; if he has honour, there may yet be hopes. [*Aside.*

Hyp. It must—it can be only so; that way I make her sure, and serve my brother, too. [*Aside.*] Well, madam, to let you see I'm a friend to love, though love's an enemy to me, give me but a seeming proof that Octavio is the undisputed master of your heart, and I'll forego the power your father's obligations give me, and throw my hopes into his arms with you.

Ros. Sir, you confound me with this goodness. A proof! is it possible? will that content you? Command me to what proof you please; nay, if you'll trust to my sincerity, let these tears convince you. Here, on my knees, by all hopes of peace, I swear——

Hyp. Hold! swear never to make a husband but Octavio.

Ros. I swear, and Heaven befriend me to keep this vow inviolate!

Hyp. Rise, madam; and now receive a proof which I need not charge you to be secret, since, as well your quiet as my own depends on it. A little common prudence between us, improbability, before night, may make us happy in our secret wishes.

Ros. What mean you, sir? Sure you are an angel sent to my deliverance.

Hyp. Truly, madam, I have been often told so; but, like most angels of my kind, the immortal man in the world, who I have in mind should know that I am—but a woman.

Ros. A woman! are not you Don Philip?

Hyp. His shadow, madam, no more; I just step before him—nay, and after him, too.

Ros. I am confounded—a woman!

Hyp. As arrant a woman, from top to toe, as ever man run mad for.

Ros. Nay, then, you are an angel.

Hyp. Perhaps, you'll think me little as one at least. Octavio, madam, your lover's brother; my name Hypolita; my story you shall know at leisure

Ros. Hypolita! nay, then, from what you said, and what I have heard Octavio say of you, I guess your story: but this was so extraordinary a thought.

Hyp. That's true, madam, it—it—it was a little round about, indeed; I might have found a nearer way to Don Philip; but these are such testy things, they can never stay one's time, always in haste, just as they please; now we are to look kind, then grave; now soft, then severe—Fiddlestick! when, may be, a woman has a new suit of knots on her head—so, if we happen not to be in their humour, forsooth, then we're coquette, and are proud and vain, and then we are to turn to fools, and tell us so; then we pouts and the other huffs; and you see then is such a plague, that——I don't know——one does not care to be rid of them neither.

Ros. A very generous confession!

Hyp. Well, madam, now you know me thoroughly, I hope you'll think me as fit for a husband as another woman.

Ros. Then I must marry ye?

Hyp. Ay, and speedily, too; for I expect Don Philip every moment, and, if we don't look about us, he will be apt to forbid the banns.

Ros. If he comes, what shall we do?

Hyp. I am provided for him. Here comes your father——he's secure. Come, put on a dutiful consenting air, and leave the rest to me.

Ros. Well, this getting the better of my wise papa won't be the least part of my satisfaction.

Enter Don MANUEL.

D. Man. So, son, how does the battle go now? Have you cannonaded stoutly? Does she cry quarter?

Hyp. My dear father! let me embrace your knees; my life's too poor to make you a return; you have given me an empire, sir, I would not change to be grand signior.

D. Man. Ah, rogue! he has done it, he has done it; he has her! ha! is't not so, my little champion?

Hyp. Victoria, sir! the town's my own. Look here! and here, sir! thus have I been plundering this half hour; and thus, and thus, and thus, till my lips ache again. [*Kisses her.*

D. Man. Ah! give me the great chair——I cannot bear my joy——You rampant rogue! could not ye give the poor girl a quarter of an hour's warning?

Hyp. My charmer! [*Embracing* ROSARA.

D. Man. Ah, my cares are over!

Hyp. Oh, I told you, sir: hearts and towns are never too strong for a surprise.

D. Man. Pr'ythee, be quiet, I hate the sight of ye.—Rosara! come hither, you wicked thing; come hither, I say.

Ros. I am glad to see you well pleased, sir.

D. Man. Oh, I cannot live—I cannot live it; it pours upon me like a torrent; I am as full as a bumper——it runs over at my eyes; I shall choke——Answer me two questions, and kill me outright.

Ros. Any thing that will make you more pleased, sir.

D. Man. Are you positively resolved to marry this gentleman?

Ros. Sir, I am convinced 'tis the first match that can make me happy.

D. Man. I am the miserablest dog alive——and I warrant you are willing to marry him tomorrow morning, if I should ask you?

Ros. Sooner, sir, if you think it necessary.

D. Man. Oh, this malicious jade has a mind to destroy me all at once——Ye cursed toad! how did ye do to get in with her so?

[*To* HYPOLITA.

Ros. Come, sir, take heart; your joy won't be always so troublesome.

D. Man. You lie, hussy, I shall be plagued with it as long as I live.

Hyp. You must not live above two hours, then. [*Aside.*

D. Man. I warrant this raking rogue will get her with child, too—I shall have a young squab Spaniard upon my lap, that will so grandpapa me!—Well, what want you, gloomy face?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a gentleman desires to speak with you; he says he comes from Seville.

D. Man. From Seville! Ha! pr'ythee, let him go thither again—tell him I am a little busy about being overjoyed.

Hyp. My life on it, sir, this must be the fellow that my servant told you of, employed by Octavio.

D. Man. Very likely.

Enter TRAPPANTI.

Trap. Sir, sir!——News, news!

D. Man. Ay, this fellow has a good merry face, now——I like him. Well, what dost thou say, lad?——But, hold, sirrah! has any body told thee how it is with me?

Trap. Sir?

D Man. Do you know, puppy, that I am ready to cry?

Trap. Cry, sir! for what?

D. Man. Joy! joy! you whelp; my cares are over; madam's to marry your master, sirrah, and I am as wet with joy as if I had been thrown into a sea full of good-luck. Why don't you cry, dog?

Trap. Uh! Well, sir, I do—But now, if you please, let me tell you my business.

D. Man. Well, what's the matter, sirrah?

Trap. Nay, no great matter, sir; only——Slylooks is come, that's all.

D. Man. Slylooks! what, the bamboozler?—ha, ha!

Trap. He, sir, he.

D. Man. I'm glad of it, faith—now I shall have a little diversion to moderate my joy—I'll wait on the gentleman myself—Don't you be out of the way, son; I'll be with ye presently—Oh, my jaws! this fit will carry me off. Ye dear toad! good-bye. [*Exit.*

Hyp. Ha, ha, ha! the old gentleman's as merry as a fiddle; how he'll start when a string snaps in the middle of his tune!

Ros. At least, we shall make him change it, I believe.

Hyp. That we shall; and here comes one that's to play upon him.

Enter FLORA, *hastily.*

Flo. Don Philip, where are you? I must needs speak with ye. Begging your ladyship's pardon, madam. [*Whispers* HYPOLITA.] Stand to your arms; the enemy's at the gate, faith:—but I've just thought of a sure card to win the lady into our party.

Ros. Who can this youth be she is so familiar with? he must certainly know her business here, and she is reduced to trust him. What odd things we women are! never to know our own minds. How very humble now has her pride made her!

Hyp. [*To* FLORA.] I like your advice so well, that, to tell you the truth, I have made bold to take it before you gave it me.

Flo. Is it possible?

Hyp. Come, I'll introduce ye.

Flo. Then, the business is done.

Hyp. Madam, if your ladyship pleases.

[*To* ROSARA.

Ros. Is this gentleman your friend, sir?

Hyp. This friend, madam, is my gentlewoman, at your service.

Ros. Gentlewoman! What, are we all going into breeches, then?

Flo. That used to be my post, madam, when I wore a needle; but, now I have got a sword by my side, I shall be proud to be your ladyship's humble servant.

Ros. Troth, I think it's a pity you should either of you ever part with your swords: I never saw a prettier couple of adroit cavaliers in my life.

Flo. Egad, I don't know how it is, madam; but, methinks, these breeches give me such a mettled air, I cannot help fancying but that I le my sex at home in my petticoats.

Hyp. Why, faith, for aught I know, lads the been born to breeches, instead of a *fille de ch bre*, fortune might have made thee a lieu at the head of a regiment——But hush! the Don Philip and the old gentleman; we must be seen yet. If you please to retire, madam, tell you how we intend to deal with them.

Ros With all my heart——Come, ladies—Gentlemen—I beg your pardon. [Exeu

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

Enter Don MANUEL *and Don* PHILIP.

D. Man. Well, sir; and so you were robbed of your portmanteau, you say, at Toledo, in which are all your letters and writings relating to your marriage with my daughter, and that's the reason you are come without them?

D. Phi. I thought, sir, you might reasonably take it ill if I should have lain a week or two in town, without paying you my duty. I was not robbed of the regard I owe my father's friend; that, sir, I have brought with me, and 'twould have been ill manners not to have paid it at my first arrival.

D. Man. Ah! how smooth the spark is!——[*Aside.*] Well, sir, I am pretty considerably glad to see you; but, I hope, you'll excuse me, if, in a matter of this consequence, I seem a little cautious.

D. Phi. Sir, I sha'n't propose any immediate progress in my affair, till you receive fresh advice from my father; in the mean time, I shall think myself obliged by the bare freedom of your house, and such entertainment as you'd, at least, afford a common stranger.

D. Man. Impudent rogue! the freedom of my house! yes, that he may be always at hand to secure the main chance for my friend Octavio—But now I'll have a touch of the bamboozle with him. [*Aside.*] Look ye, sir, while I see nothing to contradict what you say you are, d'ye see, you shall find me a gentleman.

D. Phi. So my father told me, sir.

D. Man. But, then, on the other hand, d'ye see, a man's honesty is not always written in his face; and (begging your pardon) if you should prove a damned rogue now, d'ye see?

D. Phi. Sir, I cannot, in reason, take any thing ill, that proceeds only from your caution.

D. Man. Civil rascal! [*Aside.*] No, no, as you say, I hope you won't take it ill neither; for how do I know, you know, but what you tell me (begging your pardon, again, sir), may be all a lie?

D. Phi. Another man, indeed, might say the same to you; but I shall take it kindly, if you suppose me a villain no oftener than you have occasion to suspect me.

D. Man. Sir, you speak like a man of honour, it is confessed; but (begging your pardon again, sir,) so may a rascal too, sometimes.

D. Phi. But a man of honour, sir, can never speak like a rascal.

D. Man. Why, then, with your honour's leave, sir, is there nobody here in Madrid that knows you?

D. Phi. Sir, I never saw Madrid till within these two hours, though there is a gentleman in town that knew me intimately at Seville. I met him by accident at the inn where I alighted; he is known here; if it will give you any present satisfaction, I believe I could easily produce him to vouch for me.

D. Man. At the inn, say ye, did you meet this gentleman? What's his name, pray?

D. Phi. Octavio Cruzado.

D. Man. Ha, my bully confessor! This agrees word for word with honest Trappanti's intelligence——[*Aside.*]—— Well, sir, and pray what does he give you for this job?

D. Phi. Job, sir!

D. Man. Ay, that is, do you undertake it out of good fellowship, or are you to have a sort of fellow-feeling in the matter?

D. Phi. Sir, if you believe me to be the son of Don Fernando, I must tell ye, your manner of receiving me is what you ought not to suppose can please him, or I can thank you for; if you think me an impostor, I'll ease you of the trouble of suspecting me, and leave your house, till I can bring better proofs who I am.

D. Man. Do so, friend; and in the mean time, d'ye see, pray give my humble service to the politician, and tell him, that, to your certain knowledge, the old fellow, the old rogue, and the old put, d'ye see, knows how to bamboozle as well as himself.

D. Phi. Politician! and bamboozle! Pray, sir, let me understand you, that I may know how to answer you.

D. Man. Come, come, don't be discouraged, end———sometimes, you know, the strongest ts must fail. You have an admirable head, it confessed, with as able a face to it as ever ick upon two shoulders; but who the devil can lp ill-luck? for it happens at this time, d'ye , that it won't do.

D. Phi. Won't do, sir?

D. Man. Nay, if you won't understand me w, here comes an honest fellow that will speak a point blank to the matter.

Enter TRAPPANTI.

me hither, friend; dost thou know this gentlen?

Trap. Bless me, sir! is it you? Sir, this is my master I lived with at Seville.

D. Phi. I remember thee; thy name's Trapti; thou wert my servant when I first went ravel.

Trap. Ay, sir, and about twenty months after came home, too.

D. Phi. You see, sir, this fellow knows me.

D. Man. Oh, I never questioned it in the least, Pr'ythee, what's this worthy gentleman's ne, friend?

Trap. Sir, your honour has heard me talk of a thousand times; his name, sir—his name Guzman: his father, sir, old Don Guzman, is most eminent lawyer in Seville, was the very on that drew up the settlement and articles ny master's marriage with your honour's ghter: this gentleman knows all the particuas well as if he had drawn them up himself: sir, I hope there's no mistake in them that defer the marriage?

. Phi. Confusion!

. Man. Now, sir, what sort of answer d'ye k fit to make me?

. Phi. Now, sir? that I'm obliged, in honour, to leave your house till I at least have seen illain that calls himself Don Philip, that has ed me of my portmanteau, and would you, of your honour and your daughter.—As for rascal——

ap. Sir, I demand protection.

[*Runs behind Don* MANUEL.

Man. Hold, sir; since you are so brisk, in my own house, too—call your master, l: you'll find we have swords within can a you.

ap. Ay, sir, I may chance to send you one ake down your courage. [*Exit* TRAPPANTI.

Phi. I ask your pardon, sir; I must conne villainy I saw designed against my father's l had transported me beyond good manbut be assured, sir, use me henceforward u please, I will detect it though I lose my Nothing shall affront me, now, till I have d myself your friend indeed, and Don Fer-'s son.

Man. Nay, look ye, sir, I will be very civil, I won't say a word—you shall e'en squabout by yourselves: not but, at the same time, thou art to me the merriest fellow that ever I saw in my life.

Enter HYPOLITA, FLORA, *and* TRAPPANTI.

Hyp. Who's this that dares usurp my name, and calls himself Don Philip de las Torres?

D. Phi. Ha! this is a young competitor indeed! [*Aside.*

Flo. Is this the gentleman, sir?

D. Man. Yes, yes; that's he; ha, ha!

D. Phi. Yes, sir, I'm the man who, but this morning, lost that name upon the road. I'm informed an impudent young rascal has picked it out of some writings in the portmanteau he robbed me of, and has brought it hither before me. D'ye know any such, sir?

Flo. The fellow really does it very well, sir.

D. Man. Oh, to a miracle! [*Aside.*

Hyp. Pr'ythee, friend, how long dost thou expect thy impudence will keep thee out of gaol? Could not the coxcomb, that put thee upon this, inform thee, too, that this gentleman was a magistrate?

D. Man. Well said, my little champion.

D. Phi. Now, in my opinion, child, that might as well put thee in mind of thy own condition; for, suppose thy wit and impudence should so far succeed, as to let thee ruin this gentleman's family, by really marrying his daughter, thou can'st not but know 'tis impossible thou should'st enjoy her long; a very few days must unavoidably discover thee: in the mean time, if thou wilt spare me the trouble of exposing thee, and generously confess thy roguery, thus far I'll forgive thee; but if thou still proceedest upon his credulity to a marriage with the lady, don't flatter thyself that all her fortune shall buy off my evidence; for I'm bound in honour, as well as law, to hang thee for the robbery.

Hyp. Sir, you are extremely kind.

Flo. Very civil, 'egad.

Hyp. But may not I presume, my dear friend, this wheedle was offered as a trial of this gentleman's credulity? Ha, ha, ha!

D. Man. Indeed, my friend, 'tis a very shallow one. Canst thou think I'm such a sot as to believe, that, if he knew 'twere in thy power to hang him, he would not have run away at the first sight of thee?

Trap. Ay, sir, he must be a dull rogue indeed, that would not run away from a halter—Ha, ha, ha! [*All laugh.*

D. Phi. Sir, I ask your pardon: I begin now to be a little sensible of my folly——I perceive this gentleman has done his business with you effectually: however, sir, the duty I owe my father obliges me not to leave your cause, though I'll leave your house immediately. When you see me next, you'll know Don Philip from a rascal.

D. Man. Ah, 'twill be the same if I know a rascal from Don Philip! But, if you please, sir, never give yourself any further trouble in this business; for what you have done, d'ye see, is so

far from interrupting my daughter's marriage, that, with this gentleman's leave, I'm resolved to finish it this very hour; so that, when you see your friend the politician, you must tell him you had cursed luck; that's all. Ha, ha, ha!

D. Phi. Very well, sir; I may have better when I see you next.

Hyp. Look ye, sir, since your undertaking (though you designed it otherwise) has promoted my happiness, thus far I pass it by; though I question if a man, that stoops to do such base injuries, dares defend them with his sword: however, now at least you're warned; but, be assured, your next attempt——

D. Phi. Will startle you, my spark. I am afraid you'll be a little humbler when you are hand-cuffed. Though you won't take my word against him, sir, perhaps another magistrate may my oath, which, because I see his marriage is in haste, I am obliged to make immediately. If he can outface the law, too, I shall be content to be the coxcomb then you think me.

[*Exit Don* PHILIP.

D. Man. Ah, poor fellow! he's resolved to carry it off with a good face, however. Ha, ha, ha!

Trap. Ay, sir, that's all he has for't, indeed.

Hyp. Trappanti, follow him, and do as I directed. [*Aside to* TRAPPANTI.

Trap. I warrant ye, sir. [*Exit* TRAPPANTI.

D. Man. Ha! my little champion, let me kiss thee; thou hast carried the day like a hero.—— Man, nor woman, nothing can stand before thee. I'll make thee monarch of my daughter immediately.

Hyp. That's the Indies, sir.

D. Man. Well said, my lad—Ah, my heart's going to dance again! Pr'ythee, let's in before it gets the better of me, and give the bride an account of thy victory.

Hyp. Sir, if you please to prepare the way, I'll march after you in form, and lay my laurels at her feet like a conqueror.

D. Man. Say'st thou so, my little soldier? Why, then, I'll send for the priest, and thou shalt be married in triumph.

[*Exit Don* MANUEL.

Hyp. Now, Flora.

Flo. Ay, now, madam, who says we are not politicians? I'd fain see any turn of state managed with half this dexterity. But, pray, what is Trappanti detached for?

Hyp. Only to interrupt the motions of the enemy, girl, till we are safe in our trenches; for, should Don Philip chance to rally upon us with an alguazil and a warrant, before I am fast tied to the lady, we may be routed, for all this.

Flo. Trappanti knows his business, I hope.

Hyp. You'll see presently—but hush! here comes my brother: poor gentleman! he's upon thorns, too; I have made Rosara write him a most provoking letter.

Flo. Nay, you have an admirable genius to mischief. But what has poor Octavio done to you, that he must be plagued, too?

Hyp. Well, dear Flora, don't chide; indeed this shall be the last day of my reign. Come now, let's in, keep up the old Don's humour, and laugh at him.

Flo. Ay, there, with all my heart! [*Exeunt.*

Enter OCTAVIO *with a letter, and* VILETTA.

Oct. Rosara false! distraction!

Vil. Nay, don't be in such a passion.

Oct. Confess it, too! so changed with an hour!

Vil. Oh, dear sir, if you had but seen how young gentleman laid about him, you'd ha' wondered how she held out so long.

Oct. Death! 'tis impossible!

Vil. Common, sir, common. I have known prouder lady as nimble as she. What will lay, that, before the moon changes, she is false to your rival?

Oct. Don't torture me, Viletta.

Vil. Come, sir, take heart; my life on't, you be the happy man at last.

Oct. Thou art mad. Does she not tell here, in her letter, she has herself consented marry another? nay, does not she, too, insult with a——yet loves me better than the per she's to marry?

Vil. Insult! is that the best you can on't? Ah, you men have such heads!

Oct. What dost thou mean?

Vil. Sir, to be free with you, my mistress grown wise at last; my advice, I perceive, be to work with her, and your business is done.

Oct. What was thy advice?

Vil. Why, to give the post of husband to rival, and put you in for a deputy. You know the business of the place, sir, if you mind it the help of a few good stars, and a little sun shine, there's many a fair perquisite may in your way.

Oct. Thou ravest, Viletta! 'tis impossible can fall so low.

Vil. Ah, sir, you cannot think how love humble a body!

Oct. I'll believe nothing ill of her, till her mouth confess it: she can never own this she cannot but know I should stab her with proaches: therefore, dear Viletta, ease me of torments; go this moment, and tell her I'm the rack till I speak with her.

Vil. Sir, I dare not for the world! the gentleman's with her; he'll knock my brains

Oct. I'll protect thee with my life.

Vil. Sir, I would not venture to do it for—for—for—yes, I would for a pistole.

Oct. Confound her!—There, there 'tis: Viletta, be my friend this time, and I'll be for ever.

Vil. Now, sir, you deserve a friend.

[*Exit* VILETTA.

Oct. Sure this letter must be but artifice. humour to try how far my love can bear—yet, methinks, she cannot but know the dence of my young rival, and her father's tunity, are too pressing to allow her any

fool away: and, if she were really false, she could not take a pride in confessing it. Death! I know not what to think; the sex is all a riddle, and we are the fools that crack our brains to expound them.

Re-enter VILETTA.

Now, dear Viletta!

Vil. Sir, she begs your pardon; they have just sent for the priest; but they will be glad to see you about an hour hence, as soon as the wedding's over.

Oct. Viletta!

Vil. Sir, she says, in short, she cannot possibly speak with you now, for she is just going to be married.

Oct. Death! daggers! blood! confusion! and ten thousand furies!

Vil. Hey-day! what's all this for?

Oct. My brains are turned, Viletta.

Vil. Ay, by my troth, so one would think, if one could but believe you had any at all; if you have three grains, I'm sure you cannot but know her compliance with this match must give her a little liberty; and can you suppose she'd desire to see you an hour hence, if she did not design to make use of it?

Oct. Use of it! Death! When the wedding's over?

Vil. Dear sir, but the bedding won't be over, and, I presume, that's the ceremony you have a mind to be master of.

Oct. Don't flatter me, Viletta.

Vil. Faith, sir, I'll be very plain: you are, to me, the dullest person I ever saw in my life; but, if you have a mind, I'll tell her you won't come.

Oct. No, don't say so, Viletta.

Vil. Then pray, sir, do as she bids you; don't stay here to spoil your own sport: you'll have the old gentleman come thundering down upon me by-and-by, and then we shall have ye at your ten thousand furies again. Hist! Here's company; good-bye to ye. [*Exit* VILETTA.

Oct. How now? what's the meaning of this?

Enter Don PHILIP, *his sword drawn, and* TRAPPANTI.

D. Phi. Come, sir, there's no retreating now; this you must justify.

Trap. Sir, I will, and a great deal more; but, pray, sir, give me leave to recover my courage—I protest, the keen looks of that instrument have quite frighted it away. Pray, put it up, sir.

D. Phi. Nay, to let thee see I had rather be thy friend than enemy, I'll bribe thee to be honest. Discharge thy conscience like a man, and I'll engage to make these five teh pieces.

Enter a Servant.

Trap. Sir, your business will be done effectually.

D. Phi. Here, friend, will ye tell your master I desire to speak with him? [*Exit Serv.*

Oct. Don Philip!

D. Phi. Octavio! this is fortunate indeed! the only place in the world I would have wished to have found ye in.

Oct. What's the matter?

D. Phi. You'll see presently. But, pr'ythee, how stands your affair with your mistress?

Oct. The devil take me if I can tell ye!——I don't know what to make of her; about an hour ago, she was for scaling walls to come at me; and this minute—whip, she's going to marry the stranger I told you of; nay, confesses too, 'tis with her own consent; and yet begs, by all means, to see me as soon as her wedding's over. Is it not very pretty?

Re-enter a Servant.

D. Phi. Something gay, indeed.

Serv. Sir, my master will wait on you presently. [*Exit Serv.*

Oct. But the plague on't is, my love cannot bear this jesting, Well, now, how stands your affair? have you seen your mistress yet?

D. Phi. No, I cann't get admittance to her.

Oct. How so?

D. Phi. When I came to pay my duty here to the old gentleman——

Oct. Here!

D. Phi. Ay, I found an impudent young rascal here before me, that had taken my name upon him, robbed me of my portmanteau, and, by virtue of some papers there, knew all my concerns to a tittle: he has told a plausible tale to her father, faced him down that I'm an impostor, and, if I don't this minute prevent him, is going to marry the lady.

Oct. Death and hell! [*Aside.*] What sort of fellow was this rascal?

D. Phi. A little pert coxcomb: by his impudence and dress, I guess him to be some French page.

Oct. A white wig, red coat——

D. Phi. Right; the very picture of the little Englishman we knew at Paris.

Oct. Confusion! my friend at last my rival, too——Yet hold—my rival is my friend; he owns he has not seen her yet—— [*Aside.*

D. Phi. You seem concerned.

Oct. Undone for ever, unless dear Philip's still my friend.

D. Phi. What's the matter?

Oct. Be generous, and tell me, have I ever yet deserved your friendship?

D. Phi. I hope my actions have confessed it.

Oct. Forgive my fears, and, since 'tis impossible you can feel the pain of loving her you are engaged to marry, not having (as you own) yet ever seen her, let me conjure you, by all the ties of honour, friendship, and pity, never to attempt her more.

D. Phi. You amaze me!

Oct. 'Tis the same dear creature I so passionately dote on.

D. Phi. Is it possible? Nay, then, be easy in thy thoughts, Octavio; and now I dare confess the folly of my own: I'm not sorry thou art my

rival here. In spite of all my weak philosophy, I must own, the secret wishes of my soul are still Hypolita's. I know not why; but yet, methinks, the unaccountable repulses I have met with here, look like an omen of some new, though far distant, hope of her. I cann't help thinking, that my fortune still resolves, spite of her cruelty, to make me one day happy.

Oct. Quit but Rosara, I'll engage she shall be yours.

D. Phi. Not only that, but will assist you, with my life, to gain her: I shall easily excuse myself to my father for not marrying the mistress of my dearest friend.

Oct. Dear Philip, let me embrace you! But how shall we manage the rascal of an impostor? Suppose you run immediately, and swear the robbery against him?

D. Phi. I was just going about it; but accidentally meeting with this fellow has luckily prevented me, who, you must know, has been chief engineer in the contrivance against me; but, between threats, bribes, and promises, has confessed the whole roguery, and is now ready to swear it against him: so, because I understand the spark is very near his marriage, I thought this would be the best and soonest way to detect him.

Oct. That's right; the least delay might have lost all: besides, I am here to strengthen his evidence; for I can swear that you are the true Don Philip.

D. Phi. Right.

Trap. Sir, with humble submission, that will be quite wrong.

Oct. Why so?

Trap. Because, sir, the old gentleman is substantially convinced, that 'tis you who have put Don Philip upon laying this pretended claim to his daughter, purely to defer the marriage, that, in the mean time, you might get an opportunity to run away with her; for which reason, sir, you'll find your evidence will but fly in your face, and hasten the match with your rival.

D. Phi. Ha! There's reason in that. All your endeavours will but confirm his jealousy of me.

Oct. What would you have me do?

Trap. Don't appear at the trial, sir.

D. Phi. By no means! rather wait a little in the street. be within call, and leave the management to me.

Oct. Be careful, dear Philip.

D. Phi. I always used to be more fortunate in serving my friend than myself.

Oct. But, hark ye, here lives an alguazil at the next house; suppose I should send him to you to secure the spark in the mean time?

D. Phi. Do so: we must not lose a moment.

Oct. I won't stir from the door.

D. Phi. You'll soon hear of me: away.

[*Exit* OCT.

Trap. So, now I have divided the enemy, there can be no great danger if it should come to a battle—Basta! here comes our party.

D. Phi. Stand aside till I call for you.

[TRAP. retires.

Enter Don MANUEL.

D. Man. Well, sir, what service have you to command me now, pray?

D. Phi. Now, sir, I hope my credit will stand a little fairer with you: all I beg is but your patient hearing.

D. Man. Well, sir, you shall have it. But then, I must beg one favour of you too, which is to make the business as short as you can; for to tell you the truth, I am not very willing to take any farther trouble about it.

D Phi. Sir, if I don't now convince you of your error, believe and use me like a villain. In the mean time, sir, I hope you'll think of a proper punishment for the merry gentleman that hath imposed upon you.

D. Man. With all my heart; I'll leave him to thy mercy. Here he comes; bring him to me as soon as you please.

Enter FLORA *and* HYPOLITA.

Flo. So! Trappanti has succeeded; he's come without the officers. [*To Hyp.*

Hyp. Hearing, sir, you were below, I did not care to disturb the family, by putting the others to the trouble of a needless search: let me see your warrant; I'm ready to obey it.

D. Man. Ay, where's your officer?

Flo. I thought to have seen him march in state, with an alguazil before him.

D. Phi. I was afraid, sir, upon second thoughts your business would not stay for a warrant, though 'tis possible I may provide for you, who think this gentleman's a magistrate: in the mean time——O! here, I have prevailed with an alguazil to wait upon ye.

Enter Alguazil.

Alg. Did you send for me, sir?

D. Phi. Ay, secure that gentleman.

D. Man. Hold, hold, sir! all things in order: this gentleman is yet my guest; let me be first acquainted with his crime, and then I shall better know how he deserves to be treated; and, that we may have no hard words upon one another, if you please, sir, let me first talk with you in private. [*They retire.*

Hyp. Undone! that fool Trappanti, or the villain, I know not which, has at last mistaken or betrayed me! Ruined past redemption!

Flo. Our affairs, methinks, begin to look with a very indifferent face. Ha! the old Don seems surprised——I don't like that——What shall we do?

Hyp. I am at my wit's end. [*Aside.*

Flo. Then we must either confess, or to gaol, that's positive.

Hyp. I'll rather starve there than be discovered. Should he at last marry with Rosara, the very shame of this attempt would kill me.

Flo. Death! what d'ye mean? that hare-brained

ɔk were enough to confirm a suspicion: bear , for shame!

Hyp. Impossible! I am dashed, confounded; thou hast any courage left, shew it quickly.), speak before my fears betray me. [*Aside.*

D. Man. If you can make this appear by any tness, sir, I confess 'twill surprise me indeed.

Flo. Ay, sir, if you have any witnesses, we de- e you'd produce them.

D. Phi. Sir, I have a witness at your service, l a substantial one.——Hey! Trappanti!

Enter TRAPPANTI.

ɔw, sir, what think ye?

Hyp. Ha! the rogue winks—then there's life in. [*Aside.*] Is this your witness, sir?

D. Phi. Yes, sir; this poor fellow, at last, eems, happens to be honest enough to confess ıself a rogue, and your accomplice.

Hyp. Ha, ha!

D. Phi. Ha, ha! you are very merry, sir.

D. Man. Nay, there's a jest between ye, that's tain—But, come, friend, what say you to the iness? have ye any proof to offer, upon oath, t this gentleman is the true Don Philip, and, ısequently, this other an impostor?

D. Phi. Speak boldly.

Trap. Ay, sir, but shall I come to no harm, if o speak?

D. Man. Let it be the truth, and I'll protect e.

Trap. Are you sure I shall be safe, sir?

D. Man. I'll give you my word of honour: ak boldly to the question.

Trap. Well, sir, since I must speak, then, in first place, I desire your honour would be ased to command the officer to secure that tleman.

D. Man. How, friend?

D. Phi. Secure me, rascal!

Trap. Sir, if I cann't be protected, I shall ne- be able to speak.

D. Man. I warrant thee.—What is it you say, nd?

Trap. Sir, as I was just now crossing the street, gentleman, with a sneer in his face, takes me the hands, claps five pistoles in my palm, (here y are) shuts my fist close upon them; my dear nd, says he, you must do me a piece of ser- ; upon which, sir, I bows me to the ground, desired him to open his case.

D. Phi. What means the rascal?

D. Man. Sir, I am as much amazed as you; pray let's hear him, that we may know his aning.

Trap. So, sir, upon this he runs me over a long y of a sham and a flam he had just contrived, said to defer my master's marriage only for days.

D. Phi. Confusion!

Flo. Nay, pray, sir, let's hear the evidence.

Trap. Upon the close of the matter, sir, I nd, at last, by his eloquence, that the whole iness depended upon my bearing a little false ness against my master.

Hyp. Oh, ho!

Trap. Upon this, sir, I began to demur: sir, says I, this business will never hold water; don't let me undertake it; I must beg your pardon; gave him the negative shrug, and was for sneaking off with the fees in my pocket.

D. Man. Very well!

D. Phi. Villain!

Flo. and Hyp. Ha, ha, ha!

Trap. Upon this, sir, he catches me fast hold by the collar, whips out his poker, claps it within half an inch of my guts; now, dog! says he, you shall do it, or, within two hours, stink upon the dunghill you came from.

D. Phi. Sir, if there be any faith in mortal man——

D. Man. Nay, nay, nay, one at a time; you shall be heard presently. Go on, friend.

Trap. Having me at this advantage, sir, I began to think my wit would do me more service than my courage; so, prudently pretended, out of fear, to comply with his threats, and swallow the perjury; but, now, sir, being under protection, and at liberty of conscience, I have honesty enough, you see, to tell you the whole truth of the matter.

D. Man. Ay, this is evidence, indeed!

Omn. Ha, ha, ha!

D. Phi. Dog! villain! did not you confess to me that this gentleman picked you up, not three hours ago, at the same inn where I alighted? that he had owned his stealing my portmanteau at Toledo? that, if he succeeded to marry the lady, you were to have a considerable sum for your pains; and these two were to share the rest of her fortune between them?

Trap. O lud! O lud! Sir, as I hope to die in my bed, these are the very words he threatened to stab me if I would not swear against my master——I told him at first, sir, I was not fit for his business; I was never good at a lie in my life.

Alg. Nay, sir, I saw this gentleman's sword at his breast, out of my window.

Trap. Look ye there, sir!

D. Phi. Damnation!

Omn. Ha, ha, ha!

D. Man. Really, my friend, thou art almost turned fool in this business; if thou hadst prevailed upon this wretch to perjure himself, couldst thou think I should not have detected him? But, poor man! you were a little hard put to it indeed; any shift was better than none: it seems you knew 'twould not be long to the wedding. You may go, friend. [*Exit Alguazil.*

Flo. Ha, ha!

D. Phi. Sir, by my eternal hopes of peace and happiness, you're imposed on! If you proceed thus rashly, your daughter is inevitably ruined. If what I have said be not true in fact, as hell or he is false, may Heaven brand me with the severest marks of perjury! Defer the marriage but an hour.

D. Man. Ay, and in half that time, I suppose, you are in hopes to defer it for altogether.

D. Phi. Perdition seize me, if I have any hope or thought but that of serving you!

D. Man. Nay, now, thou art a downright distracted man—Dost thou expect I should take thy bare word, when here were two honest fellows that have just proved thee in a lie to thy face?

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, the priest is come.

D. Man. Is he so? then, sir, if you please, since you see you can do me no farther service, I believe it may be time for you to go.—Come, son, now let's wait upon the bride, and put an end to this gentleman's trouble altogether.

[*Exit Don* MANUEL.

Hyp. Sir, I'll wait on ye.

D. Phi. Confusion! I've undone my friend.

[*Walks about.*

Flo. [*Aside.*] Trappanti! rogue, this was a master-piece.

Trap. [*Aside.*] Sir, I believe it won't be mended in haste. [*Exeunt* FLO. *and* TRAP.

Hyp. Sir.

D. Phi. Ha! alone! If I were not prevented now——Well, sir.

Hyp. I suppose you don't think the favours you have designed me are to be put up without satisfaction; therefore, I shall expect to see you early to-morrow, near the Prado, with your sword in your hand; in the mean time, sir, I'm a little more in haste to be the lady's humble servant than your's. [*Going.*

D. Phi. Hold, sir!—you and I cann't part upon such easy terms.

Hyp. Sir!

D. Phi. You are not so near the lady, sir, perhaps, as you imagine. [*D.* PHI. *locks the door.*

Hyp. What d'ye mean?

D. Phi. Speak softly.

Hyp. Ha!

D. Phi. Come, sir—draw.

Hyp. My ruin has now caught me: my plots are yet unripe for execution; I must not, dare not, let him know me till I am sure at least he cannot be another's——This was the very spite of fortune. [*Aside.*

D. Phi. Come, sir, my time's but short.

Hyp. And mine's too precious to be lost on any thing but love; besides, this is no proper place.

D. Phi. O! we'll make shift with it.

Hyp. To-morrow, sir, I shall find a better.

D. Phi. No, now, sir, if you please—Draw, villain! or expect such usage as I'm sure Don Philip would not bear.

Hyp. A lover, sir, may bear any thing to make sure of his mistress—You know it is not fear that——

D. Phi. No evasions, sir; either this moment confess your villainy, your name and fortune, or expect no mercy.

Hyp. Nay, then—within there!

D. Phi. Move but a step, or dare to raise thy voice beyond a whisper, this minute is thy last.

[*Seizes her, and holds his sword to her breast.*

Hyp. Sir! [*Trembling*

D. Phi. Villain! be quick, confess, or—

Hyp. Hold, sir!——I own I dare not fight you.

D. Phi. No, I see thou art too poor a villain—therefore, be speedy, as thou hopest I'll spare thy life.

Hyp. Give me but a moment's respite, sir.

D. Phi. Dog! do you trifle?

Hyp. Nay, then, sir——Mercy, mercy!

[*Throws himself at his*

And, since I must confess, have pity on my [illegible] have pity on my love!

D. Phi. Thy love! what art thou, speak!

Hyp. Unless your generous compassion [illegible] me, sure the most wretched youth that ever [illegible] the pangs and torments of a successless pas[illegible].

D. Phi. Art thou indeed a lover, then [illegible] me thy condition?

Hyp. Sir, I confess my fortune's much [illegible] to my pretences in this lady, though, indeed, I born a gentleman; and, hating this [illegible] against you, which even the last extremity ruined love have forced me to, ne'er yet was [illegible] ty of a deed, or thought, that could debase birth: but, if you knew the torments I have [illegible] from her disdainful pride, the anxious days long-watched winter nights I have endured gain of her, perhaps, at last a cold relentless indeed, you'd pity me. My heart was so entirely subdued, the more she slighted me, the more loved; and, as my pains increased, grew [illegible] from cure. Her beauty struck me with that submissive awe, that, when I dared to speak, my words and looks were softer than an infant's blushes; but all these pangs of my persisting passion still were vain; nor showers of tears, nor storms of sighs, could melt or move the frozen hardness of her dead compassion!

D. Phi. How very near my condition! [*Aside.*

Hyp. But yet so subtile is the flame of love, spite of her cruelty, I nourished still a secret hoping hope, till hearing, sir, at last she was designed your bride, despair compelled me to this bold attempt of personating you. Her father knew not me, or my unhappy love; I knew, too, you never had seen her face; and, therefore, hoped, when I should offer to repair, with twice the worth, the value, sir, I robbed you of, begging thus low for your forgiveness; I say, I hoped, at least, your generous heart, if ever it was touched like mine, would pity my distress, and pardon the necessitated wrong.

D. Phi. Is't possible? Hast thou then loved in this unfortunate degree?

Hyp. Unfortunate, indeed, if you are still my rival, sir; but, were you not, I'm sure you'd pity me.

D. Phi. Nay, then, I must forgive thee; [*Raising her.*] for I have known too well the misery not to pity—any thing in love.

Hyp. Have you, sir, been unhappy there?

D. Phi. Oh! thou hast probed a wound that time or art can never heal.

Hyp. O joyful sound!—[*Aside.*] Cherish that

generous thought, and hope, from my success, your mistress, or your fate, may make you blest like me.

D. Phi. Yet, hold—nor flatter thy fond hopes too far; for, though I pity and forgive thee, yet I am bound in honour to assist thy love no farther than the justice of thy cause permits.

Hyp. What mean you, sir?

D. Phi. You must defer your marriage with this lady.

Hyp. Defer it, sir! I hope it is not her you love?

D. Phi. I have a nearest friend that is beloved, and loves her with an equal flame to your's; to him, my friendship will oblige me to be just; and yet, in pity of thy fortune, thus far I'll be a friend to thee; give up thy title to the lady, and if her choice pronounces thee the man, I here assure thee, on my honour, to resign my claim, and, not more partial to my friend than thee, promote thy happiness.

Hyp. Alas, sir! this is no relief, but certain ruin. I am too well assured she loves your friend.

D. Phi. Then, you confess his claim the fairer: her loving him is a proof that he deserves her; if so, you are bound in honour to resign her.

Hyp. Alas, sir! women have fantastic tastes, that love they know not what, and hate they know not why; else, sir, why are you unfortunate?

D. Phi. I am unfortunate, but would rather die so, than owe my happiness to any help but an enduring love.

Hyp. But, sir, I have endured, you see, in vain——

D. Phi. If thou'd'st not have me think thy story false, thy soft pretence of love a cheat, to melt me into pity, and invade my justice, yield; submit thy passion to its merit, and own I have proposed thee like a friend.

Hyp. Sir, on my knees——

D. Phi. Expect no more from me; either comply this moment, or my sword shall force thee.

Hyp. Consider, sir——

D. Phi. Nay, then, discover quick; tell me thy name and family.

Hyp. Hold, sir.

D. Phi. Speak, or thou diest.

[*A noise at the door.*

Hyp. Sir, I will—Ha! they are entering—O, for a moment's courage!—Come on, sir!

[*She breaks from him, and draws, retiring, till Don* MANUEL, FLORA, *and* TRAPPANTI, *with Servants, rush in, and part them.*

D. Man. Knock him down.

Flo. Part them.

Hyp. Away, rascal! [*To* TRAP. *who holds her.*

Trap. Hold, sir! dear sir! hold; you have given him enough.

Hyp. Dog! let me go; or I'll cut away thy hold.

D. Man. Nay, dear son! hold, we'll find a better way to punish him.

Hyp. Pray, sir, give me way—a villain, to assault me in the very moment of my happiness! [*Struggling.*

D. Phi. By heaven, sir, he this moment has confessed his villainy, and begged my pardon upon his knees.

Hyp. D'ye hear him, sir? I beg you let me go; this is beyond bearing.

D. Phi. Thou liest, villain! 'tis thy fear that holds thee.

Hyp. Ah! let me go, I say.

Trap. Help, ho! I'm not able to hold him.

D. Man. Force him out of the room there; call an officer; in the mean time, secure him in the cellar.

D. Phi. Hear me but one word, sir.

D. Man. Stop his mouth——Out with him. [*They hurry him off.*

Come, dear son! be pacified.

Hyp. A villain! [*Walking in a heat.*

Flo. Why should he be concerned, now he's secure? such a rascal would but contaminate the sword of a man of honour.

D. Man. Ay, son, leave him to me and the law.

Hyp. I am sorry, sir, such a fellow should have it in his power to disturb me——But——

Enter ROSARA.

D. Man. Look; here's my daughter in a fright to see for you.

Hyp. Then, I'm composed again. [*Runs to* ROSARA.

Ros. I heard fighting here; I hope you are not wounded, sir?

Hyp. I have no wound but what the priest can heal!

D. Man. Ay! well said, my little champion!

Hyp. Oh, madam, I have such a terrible escape to tell you! [*Aside.*

Ros. Truly, I began to be afraid I should lose my little husband! [*Aside.*

Hyp. Husband, quotha! Get me but once safe out of these breeches, if ever I wear them again—— [*Aside.*

D. Man. Come, come, children, the priest stays for us.

Hyp. Sir, we wait on you. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

Enter TRAPPANTI.

Trap. What, in the name of roguery, can this new master of mine be? he's either a fool or bewitched, that's positive.—First, he gives me fifty pieces for helping him to marry the lady, and, as soon as the wedding is over, claps me twenty more into the other hand, to help him to get rid of her—Nay, not only that, but gives me a strict charge to observe his directions in being evidence against him as an impostor, to refund all the lies I have told in his service, to sweep him clear out of my conscience, and, now, to swear the robbery against him. What the bottom of this can be, I must confess, does a little puzzle my wit——There's but one way in the world I can solve it——He must certainly have some reason to hang himself, that he's ashamed to own; and so was resolved first to be married, that his friends might not wonder at the occasion! But, here he comes, with his noose in his hand.

Enter HYPOLITA *and* ROSARA.

Hyp. Trappanti, go to Don Pedro; he has business with you.

Trap. Yes, sir. [*Exit* TRAP.

Ros. Who's Don Pedro, pray?

Hyp. Flora, madam; he knows her yet by no other name.

Ros. Well, if Don Philip does not think you deserve him, I'm afraid he won't find another woman that will have him in haste. But this last escape of yours was such a master-piece!

Hyp. Nay, I confess, between fear and shame, I would have given my life for a ducat.

Ros. Though I wonder, when you perceived him so sensibly touched with his old passion, how you had patience to conceal yourself any longer.

Hyp. Indeed, I could not easily have resisted it, but that I knew, if I had been discovered before my marriage with you, your father, to be sure, would have insisted then upon his contract with him, which I did not know how far Don Philip might be carried in point of honour to keep; I knew, too, his refusing it would but the more incense the old gentleman against my brother's happiness with you; and I found myself obliged, in gratitude, not to build my own upon the ruin of yours.

Ros. This is an obligation I never could deserve.

Hyp. Your assistance, madam, in my affair has overpaid it.

Ros. What's become of Don Philip? I hope you have not kept him prisoner all this while?

Hyp. Oh, he'll be released presently; Flora has her orders. Where's your father, madam?

Ros. I saw him go towards his closet: I believe he's gone to fetch you part of my fortune, he seemed in mighty good humour.

Hyp. We must be sure to keep it up as long as we can, that he may be the more stunned when he falls.

Ros. With all my heart: methinks, I am possessed with the spirit of disobedience——Now, could I, in the humour I am in, consent to any mischief that would but heartily plague my old gentleman, for daring to be better than his word to Octavio.

Hyp. And if we don't plague him——But here he comes.

Enter Don MANUEL.

D. Man. Ah, my little conqueror! let me embrace thee!———That ever I should see this day! this most triumphant day! this day of all days in my life!

Hyp. Ay, and of my life too, sir. [*Embracing him.*

D. Man. Ay, and my cares are over—now, I have nothing to do but to think of the other world, for I've done all my business in this; got as many children as I could; and, now I'm grown old, have set a young couple to work that will do it better.

Hyp. I warrant ye, sir, you'll soon see whether your daughter has married a man or no.

D. Man. Ah, well said! and that you may never be out of humour with your business, look you here, children, I have brought you some baubles that will make you merry as long as you live; twelve thousand pistoles are the least value of them; the rest of your fortune shall be paid in the best Barbary gold to-morrow morning

Hyp. Ay, sir, this is speaking like a father! this is encouragement, indeed!

D. Man. Much good may do thy heart and soul with them—and Heaven bless you together! I have had a great deal of care and trouble to bring it about, children; but, thank my stars, 'tis over—'tis over now—now, I may sleep with my doors open, and never have my slumbers broken with the fear of rogues and rivals.

Ros. Don't interrupt him, and see how far his humour will carry him. [*To* HYPOLITA.

D. Man. But there is no joy lasting in this world; we must all die, when we have done our best, sooner or later; old or young, prince or peasant, high or low, kings, lords, and—common whores must die! nothing certain; we are forced to buy one comfort with the loss of another. Now I have married my child, I have lost my companion—I have parted with my girl—her

heart's gone another way now—She'll forget her old father—I shall never have her wake me more, like a cheerful lark, with her pretty songs in a morning——I shall have nobody to chat at dinner with me now, or take up a godly book, and read me to sleep in an afternoon. Ah! these comforters are all gone now! [*Weeps.*

Hyp. How very near the extreme of one passion is to another! Now he is tired with joy, till he is downright melancholy.

Ros. What's the matter, sir?

D. Man. Ah, my child! now it comes to the test, methinks, I don't know how to part with thee.

Ros. Oh, sir! we shall be better friends than ever.

D. Man. Uh, uh! shall we? wilt thou come and see the old man, now and then? Well, Heaven bless thee! give me a kiss—I must kiss thee at parting: be a good girl, use thy husband well, make an obedient wife, and I shall die contented.

Hyp. Die, sir! Come, come, you have a great while to live—Hang these melancholy thoughts! they are the worst company in the world at a wedding—Consider, sir, we are young; if you would oblige us, let us have a little life and mirth, a jubilee to-day at least; stir your servants; call in your neighbours; let me see your whole family mad for joy, sir.

D. Man. Ha! shall we, shall we be merry, then?

Hyp. Merry, sir! ay, as beggars at a feast What! shall a dull Spanish custom tell me, when I am the happiest man in the kingdom, I sha'n't be as mad as I have a mind to? Let me see the face of nothing to-day but revels, friends, feasts, and music, sir.

D. Man. Ah! thou shalt have thy humour—thou shalt have thy humour! Hey, within there! rogues! dogs! slaves! where are my rascals? Ah, my joy flows again——I cann't bear it.

Enter several Servants.

Serv. Did you call, sir?

D. Man. Call, sir! ay, sir. What's the reason you are not all out of your wits, sir! don't you know that your young mistress is married, scoundrels?

1st Serv. Yes, sir; and we are all ready to be mad as soon as your honour will please to give any distracted orders.

Hyp. You see, sir, they only want a little encouragement.

D. Man. Ah, there shall be nothing wanting this day, if I were sure to beg for it all my life after——Here, sirrah, cook! look into the Roman history; see what Mark Antony had for supper when Cleopatra first treated him *cher entire*: rogue, let me have a repast that will be six times as expensive and provoking—Go.

2d Serv. It shall be done, sir.

D. Man. And, d'ye hear? one of you step to Monsieur Vendevin, the king's butler, for the same wine that his majesty reserves for his own drinking; tell him he shall have his price for it.

1st Serv. How much will you please to have, sir?

D. Man. Too much, sir: I'll have every thing on the outside of enough to-day. Go you, sirrah, run to the theatre, and detach me a regiment of fiddlers, and singers, and dancers; and you, sir, to my nephew, Don Lewis; give my service, and bring all his family along with him.

Hyp. Ay, sir, this is as it should be; now it begins to look like a wedding.

D. Man. Ah, we'll make all the hair in the world stand an end at our joy.

Hyp. Here comes Flora——Now, madam, observe your cue.—

Enter FLORA.

Flo. Your servant, gentlemen—I need not wish you joy—You have it, I see—Don Philip, I must needs speak with you.

Hyp. Pshaw! Pr'ythee, don't plague me with business at such a time as this.

Flo. My business won't be deferred, sir.

Hyp. Sir?

Flo. I suppose you guess it, sir; and I must tell you, I take it ill it was not done before.

Hyp. What d'ye mean?

Flo. Your ear, sir. [*They whisper.*

D. Man. What's the matter now, trow?

Ros. The gentleman seems very free, methinks.

D. Man. Troth, I don't like it.

Ros. Don't disturb them, sir—We shall know all presently.

Hyp. But what have you done with Don Philip?

Flo. I drew the servants out of the way, while he made his escape; I saw him very busy in the street with Octavio and another gentleman; Trappanti dogged them, and brings me word they just now went into the Corrigidore's in the next street—therefore, what we do, we must do quickly. Come, come, put on your fighting face, and I'll be with them presently. [*Aside.*

Hyp. [*Aloud.*] Sir, I have offered you very fair; if you don't think so, I have married the lady, and take your course.

Flo. Sir, our contract was a full third; a third part's my right, and I'll have it, sir.

D. Man. Hey!

Hyp. Then, I must tell you, sir, since you are pleased to call it your right, you shall not have it.

Flo. Not, sir?

Hyp. No, sir! Look ye, don't put on your pert airs to me—'egad I shall use you very scurvily.

Flo. Use me! You little son of a whore, draw.

Hyp. Oh, sir, I am for you.

[*They fight, Don* MANUEL *interposes.*

Ros. Ah, help! murder! [*Runs out.*

D. Man. Within there! help! murder!——Why, gentlemen, are ye mad? pray put up.

Hyp. A rascal!

D. Man. Friends, and quarrel? for shame!

Flo. Friends! I scorn his friendship; and, since he does not know how to use a gentleman, I'll do a public piece of justice, and use him like a villain.

Hyp. Let me go.

D. Man. Better words, sir. [*To* FLORA.

Flo. Why, sir, d'ye take this fellow for Don Philip?

D. Man. What do you mean, sir?

Flo. That he has cheated me as well as you—but I'll have my revenge immediately.

[*Exit* FLORA.

[HYPOLITA *walks about, and Don* MANUEL *stares.*

D. Man. Hey! what's all this? what is it?—my heart misgives me.

Hyp. Hey! who waits there? Here you!—[*To a servant.*] bid my servant run, and hire me a coach and four horses immediately.

Serv. Yes, sir. [*Exit Servant.*

D. Man. A coach!

Enter VILETTA.

Vil. Sir, sir! bless me! what's the matter, sir? are you not well?

D. Man. Yes, yes—I am—that is—ha!

Vil. I have brought you a letter, sir.

D. Man. What business can he have for a coach?

Vil. I have brought you a letter, sir, from Octavio.

D. Man. To me?

Vil. No, sir, to my mistress——he charged me to deliver it immediately, for he said it concerned her life and fortune.

D. Man. How! let's see it—There's what I promised thee—begone. What can this be now! [*Reads.*] "The person whom your father ignorantly designs you to marry, is a known cheat, and an impostor; the true Don Philip, who is my intimate friend, will immediately appear with the corrigidore, and fresh evidence against him. I thought this advice, though from one you hate, would be well received, if it came time enough to prevent your ruin. OCTAVIO." Oh, my heart! this letter was not designed to fall into my hands—I am affrighted—I dare not think on't.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, your man is not within.

Hyp. Careless rascal! to be out of the way when my life's at stake—Pr'ythee, do thou go and see if thou canst get me any post-horses.

D. Man. Post horses!

Enter ROSARA.

Ros. Oh, dear sir, what was the matter?

D. Man. Hey!——

Ros. What made them quarrel, sir?

D. Man. Child!——

Ros. What was it about, sir? You look concerned.

D. Man. Concerned!

Ros. I hope you are not hurt, sir? [*To* HYP. *who minds her not.*] What's the matter with him, sir? he won't speak to me. [*To D.* MAN.

D. Man. A—speak!—a—go to him again—try what fair words will do, and see if you can pick out the meaning of all this.

Ros. Dear sir! what's the matter? [*To* HYP.

D. Man. Ay, sir, pray what's the matter:

Hyp. I am a little vexed at my servant's being out of the way, and the insolence of this other rascal.

D. Man. But what occasion have you for post-horses, sir?

Hyp. Something happens a little cross, sir.

D. Man. Pray, what is it?

Hyp. I'll tell you another time, sir.

D. Man. Another time, sir!——pray, satisfy me now.

Hyp. Lord, sir! when you see a man out of humour.

D. Man. Sir, it may be I'm as much out of humour as you: and I must tell ye, I don't like your behaviour, and I'm resolved to be satisfied.

Hyp. Sir, what is it you'd have? [*Peevishly.*

D. Man. Look ye, sir——in short—I—I have received a letter.

Hyp. Well, sir.

D. Man. I wish it may be well, sir.

Hyp. Bless me, sir! what's the matter with you?

D. Man. Matter, sir! In troth, I'm almost afraid and ashamed to tell ye—but, if you must needs know—there's the matter, sir.

[*Gives the letter.*

Enter Don LOUIS.

D. Lou. Uncle, I am your humble servant.

D. Man. I am glad to see you, nephew.

D. Lou. I received your invitation, and am come to pay my duty: but here I met with the most surprising news.

D. Man. Pray, what is it?

D. Lou. Why, first your servant told me my young cousin was to be married to-day to Don Philip de las Torres: and, just as I was entering your doors, who should I meet but Don Philip, with the corrigidore and several witnesses, to prove, it seems, that the person whom you were just going to marry my cousin to, has usurped his name, betrayed you, robbed him, and is, in short, a rank impostor!

Hyp. So, now, it's come home to him.

D. Man. Dear nephew! don't torture me. Are you sure you know Don Philip when you see him?

D. Lou. Know him, sir! were we not schoolfellows, fellow-collegians, and fellow-travellers?

D. Man. But are you sure you may not have forgot him, neither?

D. Lou. You might as well ask me if I had not forgot you, sir.

D. Man. But one question more, and I am dumb for ever——is that he?

D. Lou. That, sir! no, nor in the least like him—But, pray, why this concern? I hope we are not come too late to prevent the marriage?

D. Man. Oh, oh, oh, oh! my poor child!

Ros. Oh! [*Seems to faint.*

Enter VILETTA.

Vil. What's the matter, sir?

D. Man. Ah! look to my child.

D. Lou. Is this the villain, then, that has imposed on you?

Hyp. Sir, I'm this lady's husband, and, while I'm sure that name cann't be taken from me, I shall be contented with laughing at any other you or your party dare give me.

D. Man. Oh!

D. Lou. Nay, then, within there—such a villain ought to be made an example.

Enter Corrigidore and Officers, with Don PHILIP, OCTAVIO, FLORA, *and* TRAPPANTI.

Oh, gentlemen, we're undone! all comes too late! my poor cousin's married to the impostor!

D. Phi. How!

Oct. Confusion!

D. Man. Oh, oh!

D. Phi. That's the person, sir, and I demand your justice.

Oct. And I.

Flo. And all of us:

D. Man. Will my cares never be over?

Cor. Well, gentlemen, let me rightly understand what 'tis you charge him with, and I'll commit him immediately—First, sir, you say these gentlemen all know you to be the true Don Philip?

D. Lou. That, sir, I presume, my oath will prove.

Oct. Or mine.

Flo. And mine.

Trap. Ay, and mine, too, sir.

D. Man. Where shall I hide this shameful head?

Flo. And for the robbery, that I can prove upon him; he confessed to me at Toledo he stole this gentleman's portmanteau there to carry on his design upon this lady, and agreed to give me a third part of her fortune, for my assistance, which he refusing to pay as soon as the marriage was over, I thought myself obliged, in honour, to discover him.

Hyp. Well, gentlemen, you may insult me if you please; but, I presume, you'll hardly be able to prove that I'm not married to the lady, or have not the best part of her fortune in my pocket; so do your worst; I own my ingenuity, and am proud on't.

D. Man. Ingenuity, abandoned villain!—But, sir, before you send him to gaol, I desire he may return the jewels I gave him as part of my daughter's portion.

Cor. That cann't be, sir—since he has married the lady, her fortune is lawfully his. All we can do, is to prosecute him for robbing this gentleman.

D. Man. Oh, that ever I was born!

Hyp. Return the jewels, sir! If you don't pay me the rest of her fortune to-morrow morning, you may chance to go to gaol before me.

D. Man. Oh, that I were buried! will my cares never be over?

Hyp. They are pretty near it, sir; you cann't have much more to trouble you.

Cor. Come, sir, if you please, I must desire to take your affidavit in writing.

[*Goes to the table with* FLORA.

D. Phil. Now, sir, you see what your own rashness has brought you to. How shall I be stared at when I give an account of this to my father, or your friends in Seville! you'll be the public jest; your understanding, or your folly, will be the mirth of every table.

D. Man. Pray forbear, sir.

Hyp. Keep it up, madam. [*Aside to* ROSARA.

Ros. Oh, sir! how wretched have you made me! Is this the care you have taken of me, for my blind obedience to your commands? this my reward for filial duty?

D. Man. Ah, my poor child!

Ros. But I deserve it all for ever listening to your barbarous proposal, when my conscience might have told me my vows and person, in justice and honour, were the wronged Octavio's.

D. Man. Oh, oh!

Oct. Can she repent her falsehood then, at last! Is't possible! then I'm wounded, too! Oh, my poor, undone Rosara! [*Goes to her.*] Ungrateful, cruel, perjured man! how canst thou bear to see the light, after this heap of ruin thou hast raised, by tearing thus asunder the most solemn vows of plighted love!

D. Man. Oh, don't insult me; I deserve the worst you can say—I'm a miserable wretch, and I repent me.

Oct. Repent! can'st thou believe whole years of sorrow will atone thy crime? No; groan on; sigh and weep away thy life to come, and, when the stings and horrors of thy conscience have laid thy tortured body in the grave—then, then—as thou dost me, when it is too late, I'll pity thee.

Vil. So! here's the lady in tears, the lover in rage, the old gentleman out of his senses, most of the company distracted, and the bridegroom in a fair way to be hanged—the merriest wedding that ever I saw in my life!

Cor. Well, sir, have you any thing to say, before I make your warrant? [*To* HYPOLITA.

Hyp. A word or two, and I obey ye, sir—Gentlemen, I have reflected on the folly of my action, and foresee the disquiets I am like to undergo, in being this lady's husband; therefore, as I own myself the author of all this seeming ruin and confusion, so I am willing (desiring first the officers may withdraw), to offer something to the general quiet.

Oct. What can this mean?

D. Phi. Psha! some new contrivance—Let's be gone.

D. Lou. Stay a moment; it can be no harm to hear him—Sir, will you oblige us?

Cor. Wait without—— [*Exeunt Officers.*

Vil. What's to be done now, trow?

Trap. Some smart thing, I warrant ye; the little gentleman hath a notable head, faith!

Flo. Nay, gentlemen, thus much I know of him, that, if you can but persuade him to be honest, 'tis still in his power to make you all amends, and, in my opinion, 'tis high time he should propose it.

D. Man. Ay, 'tis time he were hanged, indeed, for I know no other amends he can make us.

Hyp. Then, I must tell you, sir, I owe you no reparation; the injuries which you complain of, your sordid avarice, and breach of promise here, have justly brought upon you—Had you, as you were obliged in conscience and in nature, first given your daughter with her heart, she had now been honourably happy; and, if any, I the only miserable person here.

D. Lou. He talks reason.

D. Phi. I don't think him in the wrong there, indeed.

Hyp. Therefore, sir, if you are injured, you may thank yourself for it.

D. Man. Nay, dear sir—I do confess my blindness, and could heartily wish your eyes, or mine, had dropped out of our heads before ever we saw one another.

Hyp. Well, sir, (however little you have deserved it,) yet, for your daughter's sake, if you'll oblige yourself, by signing this paper, to keep your first promise, and give her, with her full fortune, to this gentleman, I'm still content, on that condition, to disannul my own pretences, and resign her.

Oct. Ha! what says he?

D. Lou. This is strange!

D. Man. Sir, I don't know how to answer you; for I can never believe you'll have goodnature enough to hang yourself out of the way, to make room for him.

Hyp. Then, sir, to let you see I have not only an honest meaning, but an immediate power to make good my word, I first renounce all title to her fortune: these jewels, which I received from you, I give him free possession of; and now, sir, the rest of her fortune you owe him with her person.

Oct. I am all amazement!

D. Lou. What can this end in?

D. Phi. I am surprised, indeed!

D. Man. This is unaccountable, I must confess——But still, sir, if you disannul your pretences, how you'll persuade that gentleman, to whom I am obliged by contract, to part with his——

D. Phi. That, sir, shall be no let; I am too well acquainted with the virtue of my friend's title, to entertain a thought that can disturb it.

Hyp. Then my fears are over.—[*Aside.*]——Now, sir, it only stops at you.

D. Man. Well, sir, I see the paper is only conditional, and, since the general welfare is concerned, I won't refuse to lend you my helping hand to it; but, if you should not make your words good, sir, I hope you won't take it ill if a man should poison you.

D. Phi. And, sir, let me, too, warn you how you execute this promise; your flattery and dissembled penitence have deceived me once already, which makes me, I confess, a little slow in my belief; therefore, take heed! expect no more mercy; for, be assured of this, I never can forgive a villain.

Hyp. If I am proved one, spare me not—I ask but this—Use me as you find me.

D. Phi. That you may depend on.

D. Man. There, sir.

[*Gives* HYPOLITA *the writing again.*

Ros. Now, I tremble for her. [*Aside.*

Hyp. And now, Don Philip, I confess you are the only injured person here.

D. Phi. I know not that—do my friend right, and I shall easily forgive thee.

Hyp. His pardon, with his thanks, I am sure I shall deserve; but how shall I forgive myself? Is there, in nature, left a means that can repair the shameful slights, the insults, and the long disquiets you have known from love?

D. Phi. Let me understand thee!

Hyp. Examine well your heart; and, if the fierce resentment of its wrongs has not extinguished quite the usual soft compassion there, revive at least one spark, in pity of my woman's weakness.

D. Man. How! a woman!

D. Phi. Whither wouldst thou carry me?

Hyp. Not but I know you generous as the heart of love; yet let me doubt if even this low submission can deserve your pardon—don't look on me; I cannot bear that you should know me yet. The extravagant attempt I have this day run through, to meet you thus, justly may subject me to your contempt and scorn, unless the same forgiving goodness that used to overlook the failings of Hypolita prove still my friend, and soften all with the excuse of love.

Oct. My sister! Oh, Rosara! Philip! [*All seem amazed.*

D. Phi. Oh, stop, this vast effusion of my transported thoughts! ere my offending wishes break their prison through my eyes, and surfeit on forbidden hopes again: or, if my tears are false, if your relenting heart is touched at last in pity of my enduring love, be kind at once, speak on, and awake me to the joy, while I have sense to hear you.

Hyp. Nay, then I am subdued indeed! Is it possible, spite of my follies, still your generous heart can love? 'Tis so! Your eyes confess it, and my fears are dead. Why, then, should I blush, to let at once the honest fulness of my heart gush forth? Oh, Philip! Hypolita is—yours for ever!

[*They advance slowly, and at last rush into one another's arms.*]

D. Phi. Oh, ecstacy! Distracting joy! Do I then live to call you mine? Is there an end, at last, of my repeated pangs, my sighs, my torments, and my rejected vows? Is it possible—is it she? Oh, let me view thee thus with aching eyes, and feed my eager sense upon the transport of thy love confessed! What, kind! and yet—it is, it is Hypolita! and yet 'tis she! I

know her by the busy pulses at my heart, which only love like mine can feel, and she alone can give. [*Eagerly embracing her.*

Hyp. Now, Philip, you may insult our sex's pride, for I confess you have subdued it all in me; I plead no merit but my knowing yours; I own the weakness of my boasted power, and now am only proud of my humility.

D. Phi. Oh, never! never shall thy empire cease! 'Tis not in thy power to give thy power away: this last surprise of generous love has bound me to thy heart, a poor indebted wretch, for ever.

Hyp. No more: the rest the priest should say—but now our joys grow rude—here are our friends, that must be happy, too.

D. Phi. Louis! Octavio! my brother now! oh forgive the hurry of a transported heart!

D. Man. A woman! and Octavio's sister!

Oct. That heart that does not feel, as 'twere its own, a joy like this, ne'er yet confessed the power of friendship nor of love. [*Embracing him.*

D. Man. Have I then been pleased, and plagued, and frighted out of my wits by a woman all this while? Odsbud, she is a notable contriver! Stand clear, ho, for if I have not a fair brush at her lips—nay, if she does not give me the hearty smack, too, odswinds and thunder! she's not the good-humoured girl I took her for.

Hyp. Come, sir, I won't baulk your good humour.—[*He kisses her.*]—And now I have a favour to beg of you: you remember your promise; only your blessing here, sir.

[OCTAVIO *and* ROSARA *kneel.*

D. Man. Ah! I can deny thee nothing; and, since I find thou art not fit for my girl's business thyself, odzooks! it shall never be done out of the family—and so, children, Heaven bless you together! Come, I'll give you her hand myself, you know the way to her heart; and, as soon as the priest has said grace, he shall toss you the rest of her body into the bargain. And now my cares are over again.

Oct. We'll study to deserve your love, sir.—Oh, Rosara!

Ros. Now, Octavio, do you believe I loved you better than the person I was to marry?

Oct. Kind creature! you were in her secret, then?

Ros. I was, and she in mine.

Oct. Sister! what words can thank you?

Hyp. Any that tell me of Octavio's happiness.

D. Phi. My friend successful too! Then, my joys are double. But how this generous attempt was started first; how it has been pursued, and carried with this kind surprise at last, gives me wonder equal to my joy.

Hyp. Here is one, that, at more leisure, shall inform you all: she was ever a friend to your love, has had a hearty share in the fatigue, and now I am bound in honour to give her part of the garland, too.

D. Phi. How! she?

Flo. Trusty Flora, sir, at your service. I have had many a battle with my lady upon your account; but I always told her we should do her business at last.

D. Man. Another metamorphosis! Brave girls, faith! Odzooks, we shall have them make campaigns shortly!

D. Phi. Take this as an earnest of my thanks; in Seville, I'll provide for thee.

Hyp. Nay, here's another accomplice, too—confederate I cannat say; for honest Trappanti did not know but that I was as great a rogue as himself.

Trap. 'Tis a folly to lie; I did not indeed, madam—But the world cannot say I have been a rogue to your ladyship—and, if you had not parted with your money——

Hyp. Thou hadst not parted with thy honesty.

Trap. Right, madam; but how should a poor naked fellow resist, when he had so many pistoles held against him? [*Shews money.*

D. Man. Ay, ay; well said, lad.

Vil. La! a tempting bait, indeed! let him offer to marry me again, if he dares. [*Aside.*

D. Phi. Well, Trappanti, thou hast been serviceable, however, and I'll think of thee.

Oct. Nay, I am his debtor, too.

Trap. Ah, there's a very easy way, gentlemen, to reward me; and, since you partly owe your happiness to my roguery, I should be very proud to owe mine only to your generosity.

Oct. As how, pray?

Trap. Why, sir, I find, by my constitution, that it is as natural to be in love as an hungry, and that I ha'n't a jot less stomach than the best of my betters; and, though I have often thought a wife but dining every day upon the same dish, yet, methinks, it's better than no dinner at all: and, for my part, I had rather have no stomach to my meat, than no meat to my stomach: upon which consideration, gentlemen and ladies, I desire you'll use your interest with Madona here—to let me dine at her ordinary.

D. Man. A pleasant rogue, faith! Odzooks! the jade shall have him. Come, hussy, he's an ingenious person.

Vil. Sir, I don't understand his stuff; when he speaks plain, I know what to say to him.

Trap. Why then, in plain terms, let me a lease of your tenement—marry me.

Vil. Ay, now you say something—I was afraid, by what you said in the garden, you had only a mind to be a wicked tenant at will.

Trap. No, no, child; I have no mind to be turned out at a quarter's warning.

Vil. Well, there's my hand——and now meet me as soon as you will with a canonical lawyer, and I'll give you possession of the rest of the premises.

D. Man. Odzooks! and well thought of! I'll send for one presently. Hear you, sirrah! run to Father Benedict again, tell him his work don't hold here; his last marriage is broke to pieces; but now we have got better tackle, he must come and stitch two or three fresh couple together, as fast as he can.

Enter Servant.

Ser. Sir, the music's come.

D. Man. Ah, they could never take us in a better time—let them enter—Ladies, and sons and daughters, for I think you are all akin to me now, will you be pleased to sit?

[*After the entertainment.*

D. Man. Come, gentlemen, now our collation waits.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, the priest's come.

D. Man. That's well; we'll dispatch him presently.

D. Phi. Now, my Hypolita,
Let our example teach mankind to love,
From thine the fair their favours may improve:
To the quick pains you give our joys we owe,
Till those we feel, these we can never know.
But warned with honest hope from my success,
Even in the height of all its miseries,
Oh, never let a virtuous mind despair,
For constant hearts are love's peculiar care.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

EPILOGUE.

'MONGST all the rules the ancients had in vogue,
We find no mention of an epilogue,
Which plainly shows they're innovations, brought
Since rules, design, and nature, were forgot;
The custom therefore our next play shall break,
But now a joyful motive bids us speak;
For while our arms return with conquest home,
While children prattle Vigo and the boom,
Is't fit the mouth of all mankind, the stage, be dumb?
While the proud Spaniards read old annals o'er,
And on the leaves in lazy safety pore,
Essex and Raleigh thunder on their shore;
Again their donships start and mend their speed,
With the same fear of their forefathers dead.
While Amadis de Gaul laments in vain,
And wishes his young Quixote out of Spain:
While foreign forts are but beheld and seized,
While English hearts tumultuously are pleased,
Shall we, whose sole subsistence purely flows
From minds in joy, or undisturbed repose,
Shall we behold each face with pleasure glow,
Unthankful to the arms that made them so?
Shall we not say———
Old English honour now revives again,
Memorably fatal to the pride of Spain;
But hold———
While Anne repeats the vengeance of Elin's reign!
For to the glorious conduct sure that drew
A senate's grateful vote our adoration's due;
From that alone all other thanks are poor,
The old triumphing Romans ask'd no more,
And Rome indeed gave all within its power.
But your superior stars, that knew too well
You English heroes should old Rome's excel,
To crown your arms beyond the bribes of spoil,
Raised English beauty to reward your toil:
Though seized of all the rifled world had lost,
So fair a circle [*To the boxes.*] Rome could never boast.
Proceed, auspicious Chiefs! inflame the war,
Pursue your conquest, and possess the fair,
That ages may record of them and you,
They only could inspire what you alone could do.

THE

CARELESS HUSBAND.

BY

CIBBER.

PROLOGUE.

Of all the various vices of the age,
And shoals of fools exposed upon the stage,
How few are lasht that call for satire's rage!
What can you think to see our plays so full
Of madmen, coxcombs, and the drivelling fool?
Of cits, of sharpers, rakes and roaring bullies,
Of cheats, of cuckolds, aldermen and cullies?
Would not one swear, 'twere taken for a rule,
That satire's rod, in the dramatic school,
Was only meant for the incorrigible fool?
As if too vice and folly were confined
To the vile scum alone of human kind,
Creatures a muse should scorn; such abject trash
Deserves not satire's, but the hangman's lash.
Wretches, so far shut out from sense of shame,
Newgate or Bedlam only should reclaim;
For satire ne'er was meant to make wild monsters tame.
No, sirs—
We rather think the persons fit for plays,
Are they whose birth and education says
They've every help that should improve mankind,
Yet still are slaves to a vile tainted mind;
Such as in wit are often seen to abound,
And yet have some weak part where folly's found:
For follies sprout, like weeds, highest in fruitful ground.
And, 'tis observed, the garden of the mind
To no infestive weed's so much inclined
As the rank pride that some from affectation find:
A folly too well known to make its court
With most success among the better sort.
Such are the persons we to-day provide,
And nature's fools for once are laid aside.
This is the ground on which our play we build,
But in the structure, must to judgment yield:
And where the poet fails in art, or care,
We beg your wonted mercy to the player.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Lord MORELOVE, *attached to Lady Betty.*
Lord FOPPINGTON, *a Coxcomb of Fashion.*
Sir CHARLES EASY, *the Careless Husband.*
Servant.

WOMEN.

Lady BETTY MODISH, *attached to Lord Morelove.*
Lady EASY, *Wife to Sir Charles.*
Lady GRAVEAIRS, *a Woman of Intrigue.*
Mrs EDGING, *Woman to Lady Easy.*

SCENE,—*Windsor.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sir* CHARLES EASY'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Lady EASY.

Lady Easy. Was ever woman's spirit, by an injurious husband, broke like mine? A vile licentious man! must he bring home his follies, too? Wrong me with my very servant! O! how tedious a relief is patience! and yet, in my condition, 'tis the only remedy: for to reproach him with my wrongs, is taking on myself the means of a redress, bidding defiance to his falsehood, and naturally but provokes him to undo me. The uneasy thought of my continual jealousy may teaze him to a fixed aversion; and hitherto, though he neglects, I cannot think he hates me. It must be so: since I want power to please him, he never shall upbraid me with an attempt of making him uneasy—My eyes and tongue shall yet be blind and silent to my wrongs; nor would I have him think my virtue could suspect him, till, by some gross, apparent proof of his misdoing, he forces me to see—and to forgive it.

Enter EDGING, *hastily.*

Edg. O madam!

Lady Easy. What's the matter?

Edg. I have the strangest thing to shew your ladyship——such a discovery——

Lady Easy. You are resolved to make it without much ceremony, I find. What's the business, pray?

Edg. The business, madam! I have not patience to tell you; I am out of breath at the very thoughts on't; I shall not be able to speak this half hour.

Lady Easy. Not to the purpose, I believe! but, methinks, you talk impertinently with a great deal of ease.

Edg. Nay, madam, perhaps not so impertinent as your ladyship thinks; there is that will speak to the purpose, I am sure—A base man—

[*Gives a letter.*

Lady Easy. What is this? An open letter! Whence comes it?

Edg. Nay, read it, madam; you will soon guess—If these are the tricks of husbands, keep me a maid still, say I.

Lady Easy. [*Looking on the superscription.*] To Sir Charles Easy! Ha! Too well I know this hateful hand. O my heart! but I must veil my jealousy, which 'tis not fit this creature should suppose I am acquainted with. [*Aside.*] This direction is to your master; how came you by it?

Edg. Why, madam, as my master was lying down, after he came in from hunting, he sent me into his dressing-room, to fetch his snuff-box out of his waistcoat pocket; and so, as I was searching for the box, madam, there I found this wicked letter from a mistress; which I had no sooner read, but, I declare it, my very blood rose at him again; methought I could have torn him and her to pieces.

Lady Easy. Intolerable! This odious thing's jealous of him herself, and wants me to join with her in a revenge upon him—Sure I am fallen, indeed! But 'twere to make me lower yet to let her think I understand her. [*Aside.*

Edg. Nay, pray, madam, read it; you will be out of patience at it.

Lady Easy. You are bold, mistress; has my indulgence, or your master's good humour, flattered you into the assurance of reading his letters? a liberty I never gave myself—Here—lay it where you had it immediately—Should he know of your sauciness, 'twould not be my favour could protect you. [*Exit Lady* EASY.

Edg. Your favour! marry come up! sure I don't depend upon your favour! It's not come to that, I hope. Poor creature!—don't you think I am my master's mistress for nothing. You shall find, madam, I won't be snapt up as I have been—Not but it vexes me to think she should not be as uneasy as I. I am sure he is a base man to me, and I could cry my eyes out that she should not think him as bad to her every jot. If I am wronged, sure she may very well expect it, that is but his wife—A conceited thing—she need not be so easy, neither—I am as handsome as she, I hope—Here's my master—I'll try whether I am to be huffed by her or no.

[*Walks behind.*

Enter Sir CHARLES EASY.

Sir Cha. So! The day is come again!—Life but rises to another stage, and the same dull journey is before us. How like children do we judge of happiness! When I was stinted in my fortune, almost every thing was a pleasure to me, because most things then being out of my reach, I had always the pleasure of hoping for them; now fortune's in my hand, she is as insipid as an old acquaintance—It is mighty silly faith! Just the same thing by my wife, too; I am told she is extremely handsome—nay, and have heard a great many people say, she is certainly the best woman in the world—Why, I don't know but she may; yet I could never find that her person or good qualities gave me any concern. In my eye the woman has no more charms than my mother.

Edg. Hum! he takes no notice of me yet—

I'll let him see I can take as little notice of him. [*She walks by him gravely; he turns her about and holds her; she struggles.*] Pray, sir!

Sir Cha. A pretty pert air, that—I'll humour it—What's the matter, child? Are not you well? Kiss me, hussy.

Edg. No, the deuce fetch me if I do!

Sir Cha. Has any thing put thee out of humour, love?

Edg. No, sir, 'tis not worth my being out of humour at—though, if ever you have any thing to say to me again, I'll be burned.

Sir Cha. Somebody has belied me to thee.

Edg. No, sir, 'tis you have belied yourself to me—Did not I ask you, when you first made a fool of me, if you would be always constant to me? and did not you say I might be sure you would? And here, instead of that, you are going on in your old intrigue with my lady Gravesairs.

Sir Cha. So——

Edg. Beside, don't you suffer my lady to huff me every day as if I were her dog, or had no more concern with you—I declare I won't bear it, and she sha'n't think to huff me—for aught I know, I am as agreeable as she: and though she dares not take any notice of your baseness to her, you sha'n't think to use me so—and so, pray, take your nasty letter—I know the hand well enough—for my part, I won't stay in the family to be abused at this rate; I that have refused lords and dukes for your sake. I'd have you to know, sir, I have had as many blue and green ribbons after me, for aught I know, as would have made me a falbala apron.

Sir Cha. My lady Gravesairs! my nasty letter! and I won't stay in the family! Death! I'm in a pretty condition!—What an unlimited privilege has this jade got from being a whore!

Edg. I suppose, sir, you think to use every body as you do your wife.

Sir Cha. My wife! hah! Come hither, Mrs Edging; hark you, drab.

[*Seizing her by the shoulder.*

Edg. Oh!

Sir Cha. When you speak of my wife, you are to say your lady, and you are never to speak of your lady to me in any regard of her being my wife—for, look you, child, you are not her strumpet, but mine; therefore, I only give you leave to be saucy with me. In the next place, you are never to suppose there is any such person as my lady Gravesairs; and lastly, my pretty one, how came you by this letter?

Edg. It's no matter, perhaps.

Sir Cha. Ay, but if you should not tell me quickly, how are you sure I won't take a great piece of flesh out of your shoulder, my dear?

[*Shakes her.*

Edg. O lud! O lud! I will tell you, sir.

Sir Cha. Quickly then.

Edg. Oh! I took it out of your pocket, sir.

Sir Cha. When?

Edg. Oh! this morning, when you sent me for your snuff-box.

Sir Cha. And your ladyship's pretty curiosity has looked it over, I presume—ha?

[*Shakes her again.*

Edg. O lud! dear sir, don't be angry—indeed I'll never touch one again.

Sir Cha. I don't believe you will, and I'll tell you how you shall be sure you never will.

Edg. Yes, sir.

Sir Cha. By stedfastly believing, that the next time you offer it, you will have your pretty white neck twisted behind you.

Edg. Yes, sir. [*Curt'sying.*

Sir Cha. And you will be sure to remember every thing I have said to you?

Edg. Yes, sir.

Sir Cha. And now, child, I was not angry with your person, but your follies; which, since I find you are a little sensible of—don't be wholly discouraged—for I believe I—I shall have occasion for you again——

Edg. Yes, sir.

Sir Cha. In the mean time, let me hear no more of your lady, child.

Edg. No, sir.

Sir Cha. Here she comes: be gone!

Edg. Yes, sir—Oh! I was never so frightened in my life. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. So! good discipline makes good soldiers——It often puzzles me to think, from my own carelessness, and my wife's continual good humour, whether she really knows any thing of the strength of my forces—I'll sift her a little.

Enter Lady EASY.

My dear, how do you do? You are dressed very early to-day: are you going out?

Lady Easy. Only to church, my dear.

Sir Cha. Is it so late, then?

Lady Easy. The bell has just rung.

Sir Cha. Well, child, how does Windsor air agree with you? Do you find yourself any better yet? or have you a mind to go to London again?

Lady Easy. No, indeed, my dear; the air is so very pleasant, that if it were a place of less company, I could be content to end my days here.

Sir Cha. Pr'ythee, my dear, what sort of company would most please you?

Lady Easy. When business would permit it, yours; and, in your absence, a sincere friend, that were truly happy in an honest husband, to sit a cheerful hour, and talk in mutual praise of our condition.

Sir Cha. Are you then really very happy, my dear?

Lady Easy. Why should you question it?

[*Smiling on him.*

Sir Cha. Because I fancy I am not so good to you as I should be.

Lady Easy. Pshaw!

Sir Cha. Nay, the deuce take me if I don't really confess myself so bad, that I have often wondered how any woman of your sense, rank, and person, could think it worth her while to have so many useless good qualities.

Lady Easy. Fie, my dear!

Sir Cha. By my soul, I am serious!

Lady Easy. I cannot boast of my good qualities, nor, if I could, do I believe you think them useless.

Sir Cha. Nay, I submit to you—Don't you find them so? Do you perceive that I am one tittle the better husband for your being so good a wife?

Lady Easy. Pshaw! you jest with me.

Sir Cha. Upon my life I don't—Tell me truly, was you never jealous of me?

Lady Easy. Did I ever give you any sign of it?

Sir Cha. Um—that's true—but do you really think I never gave you occasion?

Lady Easy. That's an odd question—but suppose you had?

Sir Cha. Why then, what good has your virtue done you, since all the good qualities of it could not keep me to yourself?

Lady Easy. What occasion have you given me to suppose I have not kept you to myself?

Sir Cha. I given you occasion—Fie! My dear—you may be sure—I—look you, that is not the thing, but still a—(death! what a blunder have I made?)—a—still, I say, madam, you sha'n't make me believe you have never been jealous of me; not that you ever had any real cause, but I know women of your principles have more pride than those that have no principles at all; and where there is pride, there must be some jealousy——so that, if you are jealous, my dear, you know you wrong me, and——

Lady Easy. Why then, upon my word, my dear, I don't know that ever I wronged you that way in my life.

Sir Cha. But suppose I had given a real cause to be jealous, how would you do then?

Lady Easy. It must be a very substantial one that makes me jealous.

Sir Cha. Say it were a substantial one; suppose, now, I were well with a woman of your own acquaintance, that, under pretence of frequent visits to you, should only come to carry on an affair with me—suppose, now, my lady Graveairs and I were great?

Lady Easy. Would I could not suppose it! [*Aside.*

Sir Cha. If I come off here, I believe I am pretty safe. [*Aside.*]—Suppose, I say, my lady Graveairs and I were so very familiar, that not only yourself, but half the town should see it?

Lady Easy. Then I should cry myself sick in some dark closet, and forget my tears when you spoke kindly to me.

Sir Cha. The most convenient piece of virtue, sure, that ever wife was mistress of. [*Aside.*

Lady Easy. But pray, my dear, did you ever think that I had any ill thoughts of my lady Graveairs?

Sir Cha. O fie, child! only you know she and I used to be a little free sometimes; so I had a mind to see if you thought there was any harm in it; but since I find you so very easy, I think myself obliged to tell you, that, upon my soul, my dear, I have so little regard to her person, that the deuce take me, if I would not as soon have an affair with thy woman.

Lady Easy. Indeed, my dear, I should as soon suspect you with one as t'other.

Sir Cha. Poor dear—shouldst thou—give me a kiss.

Lady Easy. Pshaw! you don't care to kiss me.

Sir Cha. By my soul, I do!——I wish I may die, if I don't think you a very fine woman!

Lady Easy. I only wish you would think me a good wife. [*Kisses her.*] But pray, my dear, what has made you so strangely inquisitive?

Sir Cha. Inquisitive!—Why—a—I don't know one is always saying one foolish thing or another—Toll le roll! [*Sings and talks.*] My dear, why are we never to have any ball here! Toll le roll! I fancy I could recover my dancing again, if I would but practise. Toll loll loll!

Lady Easy. This excess of carelessness in him excuses half his vices. If I can make him serious, think seriously—Time yet may be my friend.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, Lord Morelove gives his service—

Sir Cha. Lord Morelove? where is he?—

Serv. At the Chocolate-house; he called to him as I went by, and bid me tell your honour he'll wait upon you presently.

Lady Easy. I thought you had not expected him here again this season, my dear.

Sir Cha. I thought so, too; but you see there's no depending upon the resolution of a man in love.

Lady Easy. Is there a chair?

Serv. Yes, madam. [*Exit Serv.*

Lady Easy. I suppose Lady Betty Modish has drawn him hither.

Sir Cha. Ay, poor soul, for all his brave, I am afraid so.

Lady Easy. Well, my dear, I ha'n't time to ask my lord how he does now; you'll excuse me to him, but I hope you'll make him dine with you.

Sir Cha. I'll ask him. If you see Lady Fe at prayers, make her dine, too: but don't take notice of my lord's being in town.

Lady Easy. Very well! if I should not see her there, I'll call at her lodgings.

Sir Cha. Do so.

Lady Easy. My dear, your servant. [*Exit Lady Easy.*

Sir Cha. My dear, I'm yours.——Well! one way or other, this woman will certainly bring about her business with me at last; for though she cannot make me happy in her own person, she lets me be so intolerably easy with the women that can, that she has at least brought me into a fair way of being as weary of them, too.

Enter Servant and Lord MORELOVE.

Serv. Sir, my lord's come.

Ld More. Dear Charles!

Sir Cha. My dear lord! this is an happiness undreamt of; I little thought to have seen you at Windsor again this season! I concluded of

course, that books and solitude had secured you 'till winter.

Ld More. Nay, I did not think of coming myself, but I found myself not very well in London; so I thought—a—little hunting, and this air——

Sir Cha. Ha! ha! ha!

Ld More. What do you laugh at?

Sir Cha. Only because you should not go on with your story: if you did but see how silly a man fumbles for an excuse, when he is a little ashamed of being in love, you would not wonder what I laugh at; ha, ha, ha!

Ld More. Thou art a very happy fellow——nothing touches thee—always easy—Then you conclude I follow Lady Betty again?

Sir Cha. Yes, faith do I: and to make you easy, my lord, I cannot see why a man, that can ride fifty miles after a poor stag, should be ashamed of running twenty in chase of a fine woman, that, in all probability, will show him so much the better sport, too. [*Embracing.*

Ld More. Dear Charles, don't flatter my distemper; I own I still follow her: do you think her charms have power to excuse me to the world?

Sir Cha. Ay! ay! a fine woman's an excuse for any thing, and the scandal of our being in jest, is a jest itself; we are all forced to be their fools before we can be their favourites.

Ld More. You are willing to give me hope; but I cann't believe she has the least degree of inclination for me.

Sir Cha. I don't know that—I am sure her pride likes you, and that's generally your fine ladies' darling passion.

Ld More. Do you suppose, if I could grow indifferent, it would touch her?

Sir Cha. Sting her to the heart——Will you take my advice?

Ld More. I have no relief but that. Had I not thee now and then to talk an hour, my life were insupportable.

Sir Cha. I am sorry for that, my lord;—but mind what I say to you——but hold, first let me know the particulars of your quarrel with her.

Ld More. Why—about three weeks ago, when I was last here at Windsor, she had for some days treated me with a little more reserve, and another with more freedom, than I found myself easy at.

Sir Cha. Who was that other?

Ld More. One of my lord Foppington's gang——the pert coxcomb that's just come to a small estate and a great periwig—he that sings himself among the women——What do you call him?——He won't speak to a commoner when a lord is in company——you always see him with a cane dangling at his button, his breast open, no gloves, one eye tucked under his hat, and a tooth-pick——Startup, that's his name.

Sir Cha. O! I have met him in a visit——but pray go on.

Ld More. So, disputing with her about the conduct of women, I took the liberty to tell her how far I thought she erred in hers. She told me I was rude, and that she would never believe any man could love a woman, that thought her in the wrong in any thing she had a mind to, at least if he dared to tell her so. This provoked me into her whole character, with so much spirit and civil malice, as I have seen her bestow upon a woman of true beauty, when the men first toasted her; so, in the middle of my wisdom, she told me, she desired to be alone, that I would take my odious proud heart along with me, and trouble her no more——I——bowed very low, and, as I left the room, vowed I never would, and that my proud heart should never be humbled by the outside of a fine woman—About an hour after, I whipped into my chaise for London, and have never seen her since.

Sir Cha. Very well; and how did you find your proud heart by that time you got to Hounslow?

Ld More. I am almost ashamed to tell you—I found her so much in the right, that I cursed my pride for contradicting her at all, and began to think, according to her maxim, that no woman could be in the wrong to a man that she had in her power.

Sir Cha. Ha, ha! Well, I'll tell you what you shall do. You can see her without trembling, I hope?

Ld More. Not if she receives me well.

Sir Cha. If she receives you well, you will have no occasion for what I am going to say to you——first you shall dine with her.

Ld More. How? where? when?

Sir Cha. Here! here! at two o'clock.

Ld More. Dear Charles!

Sir Cha. My wife is gone to invite her; when you see her first, be neither too humble, nor too stubborn; let her see, by the ease in your behaviour, you are still pleased in being near her, while she is upon reasonable terms with you. This will either open the door of an *eclaircissement*, or quite shut it against you——and if she is still resolved to keep you out——

Ld More. Nay, if she insults me, then, perhaps, I may recover pride enough to rally her by an overacted submission.

Sir Cha. Why, you improve, my lord! this is the very thing I was going to propose to you.

Ld More. Was it, faith! hark you, dare you stand by me?

Sir Cha. Dare I! ay, to my last drop of assurance, against all the insolent airs of the proudest beauty in Christendom.

Ld More. Nay, then, defiance to her—We two—Thou hast inspired me—I find myself as valiant as a flattered coward.

Sir Cha. Courage, my lord; I'll warrant we beat her.

Ld More. My blood stirs at the very thought on't: I long to be engaged.

Sir Cha. She will certainly give ground, when she once sees you are thoroughly provoked.

Ld More. Dear Charles, thou art a friend indeed!

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lord Foppington gives his service, and, if your honour's at leisure, he'll wait on you as soon as he is dressed.

Ld More. Lord Foppington! Is he in town?

Sir Cha. Yes; I heard last night he was come. Give my service to his lordship, and tell him I should be glad he will do me the honour of his company here at dinner. [*Exit Servant.*] We may have occasion for him in our design upon Lady Betty.

Ld More. What use can we make of him?

Sir Cha. We'll see when he comes; at least, there is no danger in him; but I suppose you know he is your rival.

Ld More. Pshaw! a coxcomb.

Sir Cha. Nay, don't despise him neither—— he is able to give you advice; for, though he is in love with the same woman, yet, to him, she has not charms enough to give a minute's pain.

Ld More. Pr'ythee, what sense has he of love?

Sir Cha. Faith, very near as much as a man of sense ought to have; I grant you he knows not how to value a woman truly deserving, but he has a pretty just esteem for most ladies about town.

Ld More. That he follows, I grant you——for he seldom visits any of extraordinary reputation.

Sir Cha. Have a care! I have seen him at Lady Betty Modish's.

Ld More. To be laughed at.

Sir Cha. Don't be too confident of that: the women now begin to laugh with him, not at him; for he really sometimes rallies his own humour with so much ease and pleasantry, that a great many women begin to think he has no follies at all, and those he has, have been as much owing to his youth, and a great estate, as want of natural wit: 'tis true, he often is a bubble to pleasures, but he has always been wisely wise enough to keep himself from being too much the ladies' humble servant in love.

Ld More. There, indeed, I almost envy him.

Sir Cha. The easiness of his opinion upon the sex, will go near to pique him—We must try him.

Ld More. As you please—but what shall we do with ourselves till dinner?

Sir Cha. What think you of a party at piquet?

Ld More. O! you are too hard for me.

Sir Cha. Fie! fie! when you play with a grace?

Ld More. Upon my honour, he gives me three points.

Sir Cha. Does he? Why, then, you shall give me but two—Here, fellow, get cards. *Allons* [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Lady* BETTY MODISH'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Lady BETTY, *and Lady* EASY, *meeting.*

Lady Bet. Oh, my dear! I am overjoyed to see you! I am strangely happy to-day! I have just received my new scarf from London, and you are most critically come to give me your opinion of it.

Lady Easy. Oh, your servant, madam; I am a very indifferent judge, you know. What, is it with sleeves?

Lady Bet. Oh, 'tis impossible to tell you what it is!——'Tis all extravagance, both in mode and fancy, my dear. I believe there's six thousand yards of edging in it—Then, such an enchanting slope from the elbow—something so new, so lively, so noble, so coquette and charming——but you shall see it, my dear——

Lady Easy. Indeed, I won't, my dear; I am resolved to mortify you for being so wrongfully fond of a trifle.

Lady Bet. Nay, now, my dear, you are ill-natured.

Lady Easy. Why, truly, I'm half angry to see a woman of your sense so warmly concerned in the care of her outside; for, when we have taken our best pains about it, 'tis the beauty of the mind alone that gives us lasting value.

Lady Bet. Ah, my dear! my dear! you have been a married woman to a fine purpose, indeed, that know so little of the taste of mankind. Take my word, a new fashion upon a fine woman is often a greater proof of her value, than you are aware of.

Lady Easy. That I cann't comprehend; for you see among the men, nothing's more ridiculous than a new fashion. Those of the first sense are always the last that come into them.

Lady Bet. That is, because the only merit of a man is his sense; but, doubtless, the greatest value of a woman is her beauty. An homely woman, at the head of a fashion, would not be allowed in it by the men, and consequently not followed by the women; so that, to be successful in one's fancy, is an evident sign of one's being admired; and I always take admiration for the best proof of beauty, and beauty certainly is the source of power, as power, in all creatures, is the height of happiness.

Lady Easy. At this rate, you would rather be thought beautiful than good?

Lady Bet. As I had rather command, than obey: the wisest homely woman can't make

man of sense of a fool; but the veriest fool of a beauty shall make an ass of a statesman; so that, in short, I can't see a woman of spirit has any business in this world but to dress—and make the men like her.

Lady Easy. Do you suppose this is a principle the men of sense will admire you for?

Lady Bet. I do suppose, that when I suffer any man to like my person, he sha'n't dare to find fault with my principle.

Lady Easy. But men of sense are not so easily humbled.

Lady Bet. The easiest of any; one has ten thousand times the trouble with a coxcomb.

Lady Easy. Nay, that may be; for I have seen you throw away more good humour, in hopes of a *tendresse* from my lord Foppington, who loves all women alike, than would have made my lord Morelove perfectly happy, who loves only you.

Lady Bet. The men of sense, my dear, make the best fools in the world: their sincerity and good breeding throws them so entirely into one's power, and gives one such an agreeable thirst of using them ill, to shew that power—'tis impossible not to quench it.

Lady Easy. But, methinks, my lord Morelove's manner to you might move any woman to a kinder sense of his merit.

Lady Bet. Ay, but would it not be hard, my dear, for a poor weak woman to have a man of his quality and reputation in her power, and not to let the world see him there? Would any creature sit new dressed all day in her closet? Could you bear to have a sweet-fancied suit, and never shew it at the play or the drawing-room?

Lady Easy. But one would not ride in it, methinks, or harass it out, when there's no occasion.

Lady Bet. Pooh! my lord Morelove's a mere Indian damask; one can't wear him out; o' my conscience, I must give him to my woman at last; I begin to be known by him: had not I best leave him off, my dear? for, poor soul, I believe I have a little fretted him of late.

Lady Easy. Now, 'tis to me amazing, how a man of his spirit can bear to be used like a dog for four or five years together—but nothing's a wonder in love; yet pray, when you found you could not like him at first, why did you ever encourage him?

Lady Bet. Why, what would you have one do? for my part, I could no more choose a man by my eye, than a shoe; one must draw them on a little, to see if they are right to one's foot.

Lady Easy. But I'd no more fool on with a man I could not like, than I'd wear a shoe that pinched me.

Lady Bet. Ay, but then a poor wretch tells one, he'll widen them, or do any thing, and is so civil and silly, that one does not know how to turn such a trifle, as a pair of shoes, or an heart, upon a fellow's hands again.

Lady Easy. Well; I confess you are very happily distinguished among most women of fortune, to have a man of my lord Morelove's sense and quality so long and honourably in love with you; for, now-a-days, one hardly ever hears of such a thing as a man of quality in love with the woman he would marry. To be in love, now, is only to have a design upon a woman, a modish way of declaring war against her virtue, which they generally attack first, by toasting up her vanity.

Lady Bet. Ay, but the world knows, that is not the case between my lord and me.

Lady Easy. Therefore, I think you happy.

Lady Bet. Now, I don't see it; I'll swear I'm better pleased to know there are a great many foolish fellows of quality that take occasion to toast me frequently.

Lady Easy. I vow I should not thank any gentleman for toasting me, and I have often wondered how a woman of your spirit could bear a great many other freedoms I have seen some men take with you.

Lady Bet. As how, my dear? Come, pr'ythee, be free with me, for, you must know, I love dearly to hear my faults—Who is't you have observed to be too free with me?

Lady Easy. Why, there's my lord Foppington; could any woman but you bear to see him with a respectful fleer stare full in her face, draw up his breath, and cry—Gad, you're handsome?

Lady Bet. My dear, fine fruit will have flies about it; but, poor things, they do it no harm: for, if you observe, people are generally most apt to choose that the flies have been busy with, ha, ha, ha!

Lady Easy. Thou art a strange giddy creature!

Lady Bet. That may be from so much circulation of thought, my dear.

Lady Easy. But my lord Foppington's married, and one would not fool with him, for his lady's sake; it may make her uneasy, and——

Lady Bet. Poor creature! Her pride, indeed, makes her carry it off without taking any notice of it to me; though I know she hates me in her heart, and I cannot endure malicious people; so I used to dine with her once a week, purely to give her disorder: if you had but seen when my lord and I fooled a little, the creature looked so ugly!

Lady Easy. But I should not think my reputation safe; my lord Foppington's a man that talks often of his amours, but seldom speaks of favours that are refused him.

Lady Bet. Pshaw! will any thing a man says make a woman less agreeable? Will his talking spoil one's complexion, or put one's hair out of order? and for reputation—look you, my dear, take it for a rule, that, as amongst the lower rank of people, no woman wants beauty that has fortune; so, among people of fortune, no woman wants virtue that has beauty: but an estate and beauty joined, are of an unlimited, nay, a power pontifical, make one not only absolute, but infallible——A fine woman's never in the wrong; or, if we were, 'tis not the strength of a poor creature's reason that can unfetter him. Oh, how I

love to hear a wretch curse himself for loving on, or now and then coming out with a——

Yet for the plague of human race,
This devil has an angel's face.

Lady Easy. At this rate, I don't see you allow reputation to be at all essential to a fine woman?

Lady Bet. Just as much as honour to a great man. Power is always above scandal. Don't you hear people say the king of France owes most of his conquests to breaking his word, and would not the confederates have a fine time on't, if they were only to go to war with reproaches? Indeed, my dear, that jewel reputation is a very fanciful business! One shall not see a homely creature in town, but wears it in her mouth as monstrously as the Indians do bobs at their lips, and it really becomes them just alike.

Lady Easy. Have a care, my dear, of trusting too far to power alone: for nothing is more ridiculous than the fall of pride; and woman's pride, at best, may be suspected to be more a distrust, than a real contempt of mankind; for, when we have said all we can, a deserving husband is certainly our best happiness; and I don't question but my lord Morelove's merit, in a little time, will make you think so, too; for, whatever airs you give yourself to the world, I'm sure your heart don't want good nature.

Lady Bet. You are mistaken; I am very ill-natured, though your good humour won't let you see it.

Lady Easy. Then, to give me a proof on't, let me see you refuse to go immediately and dine with me, after I have promised Sir Charles to bring you.

Lady Bet. Pray, don't ask me.

Lady Easy. Why?

Lady Bet. Because, to let you see I hate good nature, I'll go without asking, that you mayn't have the malice to say I did you a favour.

Lady Easy. Thou art a mad creature.

[*Exeunt arm in arm.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to Sir* CHARLES'S *Lodgings. Lord* MORELOVE *and Sir* CHARLES *at piquet.*

Sir Cha. Come, my lord, one single game for the tout, and so have done.

Ld More. No, hang them, I have enough of them! ill cards are the dullest company in the world—How much is it?

Sir Cha. Three parties.

Ld More. Fifteen pounds—very well.

[*While Lord* MORELOVE *counts out his money, a servant gives Sir* CHARLES *a letter, which he reads to himself.*

Sir Cha. [*To the Servant.*]—Give my service; say I have company dines with me; if I have time I'll call there in the afternoon—ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit Servant.*

Ld More. What's the matter? there—

[*Paying the money.*

Sir Cha. The old affair—My lady Graveairs.

Ld More. Oh! Pr'ythee, how does that go on?

Sir Cha. As agreeably as a Chancery suit; for now it comes to the intolerable plague of my not being able to get rid on't; as you may see—

[*Giving the letter.*

Ld More. [*Reads.*]—"Your behaviour, since I came to Windsor, has convinced me of your villainy, without my being surprised, or angry at it. I desire you would let me see you at my lodgings immediately, where I shall have a better opportunity to convince you, that I never can, or positively will, be as I have been—Yours," &c. A very whimsical letter! Faith, I think she has hard luck with you: if a man were obliged to have a mistress, her person and conduction seem to be cut out for the ease of a lover; for she's a young, handsome, wild, well-jointured widow—But what's your quarrel?

Sir Cha. Nothing—She sees the coolness happens to be first on my side, and her business with me now, I suppose, is to convince me how heartily she's vexed that she was not before-hand with me.

Ld More. Her pride, and your indifference, must occasion a pleasant scene, sure; what do you intend to do?

Sir Cha. Treat her with a cold familiar air, to pique her to forbid me her sight, and then take her at her word.

Ld More. Very gallant and provoking.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lord Foppington—

[*Exit Servant.*

Sir Cha. Oh—now, my lord, if you have a mind to be let into the mystery of making love without pain, here's one that's a master of the art, and shall declaim to you———

Enter Lord FOPPINGTON.

My dear Lord Foppington!

Ld Fop. My dear agreeable! Que je t'embrasse! Pardi! Il y a cent ans que je ne t'ai vu—my lord, I am your lordship's most obedient humble servant.

Ld More. My lord, I kiss your hands—I hope we shall have you here some time; you seem to have laid in a stock of health to be in at the diversions of the place—You look extremely well.

Ld Fop. To see one's friends look so, my lord, may easily give a *vermeille* to one's complexion.

Sir Cha. Lovers in hope, my lord, always have a visible *brilliant* in their eyes and air.

Ld Fop. What dost thou mean, Charles?

Sir Cha. Come, come, confess what really brought you to Windsor, now you have no business there?

Ld Fop. Why, two hours, and six of the best nags in Christendom, or the devil drive me!

Ld More. You make haste, my lord.

Ld Fop. My lord, I always fly when I pursue—But they are all well kept, indeed—I love to have creatures go as I bid them. You have seen

them, Charles; but so has all the world: Foppington's long tails are known on every road in England.

Sir Cha. Well, my lord, but how came they to bring you this road? You don't use to take these irregular jaunts, without some design in your head, of having more than nothing to do.

Ld Fop. Pshaw! Pox! Pr'ythee, Charles, thou knowest I am a fellow sans consequence, be where I will.

Sir Cha. Nay, nay, this is too much among friends, my lord; come, come, we must have it; your real business here?

Ld Fop. Why, then, entre nous, there is a certain fille de joye about the court, here, that loves winning at cards better than all the things I have been able to say to her,——so I have brought an odd thousand bill in my pocket, that I design tête-à-tête, to play off with her at piquet, or so; and now the business is out.

Sir Cha. Ay, and a very good business, too, my lord.

Ld Fop. If it be well done, Charles——

Sir Cha. That's as you manage your cards, my lord.

Ld More. This must be a woman of consequence, by the value you set upon her favours.

Sir Cha. Oh, nothing's above the price of a fine woman.

Ld Fop. Nay, look you, gentlemen, the price may not happen to be altogether so high, neither——For I fancy I know enough of the game to make it an even bet, I get her for nothing.

Ld More. How so, my lord?

Ld Fop. Because if she happen to lose a good sum to me, I shall buy her with her own money.

Ld More. That's new, I confess.

Ld Fop. You know, Charles, 'tis not impossible but I may be five hundred pounds deep with her—then, bills may fall short, and the devil's in't if I want assurance to ask her to pay some way or other.

Sir Cha. And a man must be a churl, indeed, that won't take a lady's personal security; ha, ha, ha!

Ld Fop. He, he, he! Thou art a devil, Charles!

Ld More. Death! How happy is this coxcomb? [*Aside.*

Ld Fop. But, to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I had another pressing temptation that brought me hither, which was—my wife.

Ld More. That's kind, indeed; my lady has been here this month: she'll be glad to see you.

Ld Fop. That I don't know; for I design this afternoon to send her to London.

Ld More. What! the same day you come, my lord? that would be cruel.

Ld Fop. Ay, but it will be mighty convenient; for she is positively of no manner of use in my amours.

Ld More. That's your fault; the town thinks her a very deserving woman.

Ld Fop. If she were a woman of the town, perhaps I should think so too; but she happens to be my wife, and, when a wife is once given to deserve more than her husband's inclinations can pay, in my mind she has no merit at all.

Ld More. She's extremely well-bred, and of a very prudent conduct.

Ld Fop. Um——ay——the woman's proud enough.

Ld More. Add to this, all the world allows her handsome.

Ld Fop. The world's extremely civil, my lord; and I should take it as a favour done me, if they could find an expedient to unmarry the poor woman from the only man in the world that cannot think her handsome.

Ld More. I believe there are a great many in the world that are sorry 'tis not in their power to unmarry her.

Ld Fop. I am a great many in the world's very humble servant; and, whenever they find it is in their power, their high and mighty wisdoms may command me at a quarter of an hour's warning.

Ld More. Pray, my lord, what did you marry for?

Ld Fop. To pay my debts at play, and disinherit my younger brother.

Ld More. But there are some things due to a wife.

Ld Fop. And there are some debts I don't care to pay——to both which I plead—husband, and—my lord.

Ld More. If I should do so, I should expect to have my own coach stopt in the street, and to meet my wife with the windows up in a hackney.

Ld Fop. Then would I put in bail, and order a separate maintenance.

Ld More. So, pay the double the sum of the debt, and be married for nothing.

Ld Fop. Now, I think deferring a dun, and getting rid of one's wife, are two of the most agreeable sweets in the liberties of an English subject.

Ld More. If I were married, I would as soon part from my estate as my wife.

Ld Fop. Now, I would not; sun-burn me if I would.

Ld More. Death! but, since you are so indifferent, my lord, why would you needs marry a woman of so much merit? Could not you have laid out your spleen upon some ill-natured shrew, that wanted the plague of an ill husband, and have let her alone to some plain, honest man of quality, that would have deserved her?

Ld Fop. Why, faith, my lord, that might have been considered; but I really grew so passionately fond of her fortune, that, curse catch me, I was quite blind to the rest of her good qualities; for, to tell you the truth, if it had been possible the old put of a peer could have tossed me in t'other five thousand for them, by my consent, she should have relinquished her merit and virtues to any of her other sisters.

Sir Cha. Ay, ay, my lord; virtues in a wife are good for nothing but to make her proud, and put the world in mind of her husband's faults.

Ld Fop. Right, Charles: and strike me blind,

but the women of virtue are now grown such sluts in love, that they expect of a man, just as they do of a coach-horse, that one's appetite, like t'other's flesh, should increase by feeding.

Sir Cha. Right, my lord; and don't consider, that toujours chapons bouillis will never do with an English stomach.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha! To tell you the truth, Charles, I have known so much of that sort of eating, that I now think, for an hearty meal, no wild fowl in Europe is comparable to a joint of Banstead mutton.

Ld More. How do you mean?

Ld Fop. Why, that, for my part, I had rather have a plain slice of my wife's woman, than my guts full of e'er an Ortolan duchess in Christendom.

Ld More. But I thought, my lord, your chief business now at Windsor had been your design upon a woman of quality.

Ld Fop. That's true, my lord; though I don't think your fine lady the best dish myself, yet a man of quality cann't be without such things at his table.

Ld More. Oh, then, you only desire the reputation of an affair with her?

Ld Fop. I think the reputation is the most inviting part of an amour with most women of quality.

Ld More. Why so, my lord?

Ld Fop. Why, who the devil would run through all the degrees of form and ceremony that lead one up to the last favour, if it were not for the reputation of understanding the nearest way to get over the difficulty?

Ld More. But, my lord, does not the reputation of your being so general an undertaker frighten the women from engaging with you? For, they say, no man can love but one at a time.

Ld Fop That's just one more than ever I came up to: for, stop my breath, if ever I loved in my life!

Ld More. How do you get them, then?

Ld Fop. Why, sometimes, as they get other people: I dress, and let them get me, or, if that won't do, as I got my title, I buy them.

Ld More. But, how can you, that profess indifference, think it worth your while to come so often up to the price of a woman of quality?

Ld Fop. Because, you must know, my lord, that most of them begin, now, to come down to reason; I mean those that are to be had; for some die fools: but, with the wiser sort, 'tis not, of late, so very expensive; now and then, a *partie quarré*, a jaunt or two in a hack to an Indian house, a little china, an odd thing for a gown, or so; and, in three days after, you meet her at the conveniency of trying it *chez Mademoiselle d' Epingle.*

Sir Cha. Ay, ay, my lord; and when you are there, you know, what between a little chat, a dish of tea, mademoiselle's good humour, and a little *chanson* or two, the devil's in't if a man can't fool away the time, 'till he sees how it looks upon her by candle-light.

Ld Fop. Heh! heh! well said, Charles; 'egad, I fancy thee and I have unlaced many a reputation there!——Your great lady is as soon undressed as her woman.

Ld More. I could never find it so—the shame or scandal of a repulse always made me afraid of attempting women of condition.

Sir Cha. Ha, ha! 'egad, my lord, you deserve to be ill used; your modesty's enough to undo any woman in the world. But my lord and I understand the sex a little better; we see plain that women are only cold, as some men are hot, from the modesty or fear of those that attack them.

Ld Fop. Right, Charles—a man should no more give up his heart to a woman, than his sword to a bully; they are both as insolent as the devil after it.

Sir Cha. How do you like that, my lord? [*Aside to Lord* Morelove.

Ld More. Faith, I envy him!—But, my lord, suppose your inclination should stumble upon a woman truly virtuous, would not a severe repulse from such an one put you strangely out of countenance?

Ld Fop. Not at all, my lord—for, if a man don't mind a box o' the ear in a fair struggle with a fresh country girl, why the deuce should he be concerned at an impertinent frown for an attack upon a woman of quality?

Ld More. Then, you have no notion of a lady's cruelty?

Ld Fop. Ha, ha! let me blood, if I think there's a greater jest in nature! I am ready to crack my guts with laughing, to see a sensible flirt, because the creature happens to have a little pride, that she calls virtue, about her, put herself all the insolent airs of resentment and disdain to an honest fellow, that, all the while does not care three pinches of snuff if she and her virtue were to run, with their best favour, through the first regiment of guards!—Ha, ha! it puts me in mind of an affair of mine, so impertinent!——

Ld More. Oh, that's impossible, my lord!—Pray, let's hear it.

Ld Fop. Why, I happened once to be very well in a certain man of quality's family, and his wife liked me!

Ld More. How do you know she liked you?

Ld Fop. Why, from the very moment I told her I liked her, she never durst trust herself at the end of a room with me.

Ld More. That might be her not liking you.

Ld Fop. My lord—Women of quality don't use to speak the thing plain—but, to satisfy you I did not want encouragement, I never came there in my life, but she did immediately smile, and borrow my snuff-box.

Ld More. She liked your snuff, at least—Well, but how did she use you?

Ld Fop. By all that's infamous, she jilted me!

Ld More. How! Jilt you?

Ld Fop. Ay, death's curse, she jilted me!

Ld More. Pray, let's hear.

Ld Fop. For, when I was pretty well convinced she had a mind to me, I one day made her a hint of an appointment: upon which, with an insolent frown in her face (that made her look as ugly as the devil,) she told me, that, if ever I came thither again, her lord should know that she had forbidden me the house before.—Did you ever hear of such a slut?

Sir Cha. Intolerable!

Ld More. But, how did her answer agree with you?

Ld Fop. Oh, passionately well! for I stared full in her face, and burst out a-laughing; at which she turned upon her heel, and gave a crack with her fan, like a coach-whip, and bridled out of the room with the air and complexion of an incensed turkey-cock.

[*A Servant whispers Sir* CHARLES.

Ld More. What did you then?

Ld Fop. I—looked after her, gaped, threw up the sash, and fell a-singing out of the window ——so that, you see, my lord, while a man is not in love, there's no great affliction in missing one's way to a woman.

Sir Cha. Ay, ay, you talk this very well, my lord; but, now, let's see how you dare behave yourself upon action—dinner's served, and the ladies stay for us—There's one within, has been too hard for as brisk a man as yourself.

Ld More. I guess who you mean—Have a care, my lord; she'll prove your courage for you.

Ld Fop. Will she? then she's an undone creature. For, let me tell you, gentlemen, courage is the whole mystery of making love, and of more use than conduct is in war; for the bravest fellow in Europe may beat his brains out against the stubborn walls of a town—but

——Women, born to be controuled,
Stoop to the forward, and the bold. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

Enter Lord MORELOVE *and Sir* CHARLES.

Ld More. So! Did not I bear up bravely?

Sir Cha. Admirably! with the best-bred insolence in nature; you insulted like a woman of quality, when her country-bred husband's jealous of her in the wrong place.

Ld More. Ha, ha! Did you observe, when I first came into the room, how carelessly she brushed her eyes over me; and, when the company saluted me, stood all the while with her face to the window? ha, ha!

Sir Cha. What astonished airs she gave herself, when you asked her, what made her so grave upon her old friends!

Ld More. And whenever I offered any thing in talk, what affected care she took to direct her observations of it to a third person!

Sir Cha. I observed she did not eat above the rump of a pigeon all dinner time.

Ld More. And how she coloured when I told her her ladyship had lost her stomach!

Sir Cha. If you keep your temper, she's undone.

Ld More. Provided she sticks to her pride, I believe I may.

Sir Cha. Ay! never fear her; I warrant, in the humour she is in, she would as soon part with her sense of feeling.

Ld More. Well, what's to be done next?

Sir Cha. Only observe her motions; for, by her behaviour at dinner, I am sure she designs to gall you with my lord Foppington: if so, you must even stand her fire, and then play my lady Graveairs upon her, whom I'll immediately pique, and prepare for your purpose.

Ld More. I understand you——the properest woman in the world, too: for, she'll certainly encourage the least offer from me, in hopes of revenging her slights upon you.

Sir Cha. Right; and the very encouragement she gives you, at the same time will give me a pretence to widen the breach of my quarrel with her.

Ld More. Besides, Charles, I own I am fond of any attempt that will forward a misunderstanding there, for your lady's sake. A woman, so truly good in her nature, ought to have something more from a man, than bare occasions to prove her goodness.

Sir Cha. Why, then, upon honour, my lord, to give you proof that I am positively the best husband in the world, my wife never yet found me out.

Ld More. That may be, by her being the best wife in the world: she, may be, won't find you out.

Sir Cha. Nay, if she won't tell a man of his faults, when she sees them, how the deuce should he mend them? But, however, you see I am going to leave them off as fast as I can.

Ld More. Being tired of a woman, is, indeed, a pretty tolerable assurance of a man's not designing to fool on with her——Here she comes; and, if I don't mistake, brimful of reproaches—You cann't take her in a better time—I'll leave you.

Enter Lady GRAVEAIRS.

Your ladyship's most humble servant. Is the company broke up, pray?

Lady Grave. No, my lord, they are talking of basset; my lord Foppington has a mind to tally, if your lordship would encourage the table.

Ld More. Oh, madam, with all my heart!

But Sir Charles, I know, is hard to be got to it: I'll leave your ladyship to prevail with him.

[*Exit Lord* MORELOVE.

[*Sir* CHARLES *and Lady* GRAVEAIRS *salute coldly, and trifle some time before they speak.*

Lady Grave. Sir Charles, I sent you a note this morning.

Sir Cha. Yes, madam; but there were some passages I did not expect from your ladyship. You seem to tax me with things that——

Lady Grave. Look you, sir, 'tis not at all material whether I taxed you with any thing or no; I don't desire you to clear yourself; upon my word, you may be very easy as to that matter; for my part, I am mighty well satisfied things are as they are; all I have to say to you is, that you need not give yourself the trouble to call at my lodgings this afternoon, if you should have time, as you were pleased to send me word—and so, your servant, sir, that's all—— [*Going.*

Sir Cha. Hold, madam.

Lady Grave. Look you, Sir Charles, 'tis not your calling me back that will signify any thing, I can assure you.

Sir Cha. Why this extraordinary haste, madam?

Lady Grave. In short, Sir Charles, I have taken a great many things from you of late, that, you know, I have often told you, I would positively bear no longer. But I see things are in vain, and the more people strive to oblige people, the less they are thanked for it: and, since there must be an end of one's ridiculousness one time or other, I don't see any time so proper as the present; and therefore, sir, I desire you would think of things accordingly. Your servant. [*Going, he holds her.*

Sir Cha. Nay, madam, let us start fair, however; you ought, at least, to stay till I am as ready as your ladyship; and then, if we must part,

Adieu, ye silent grots and shady groves;
Ye soft amusements of our growing loves;
Adieu, ye whispered sighs, that fanned the fire,
And all the thrilling joys of young desire!

[*Affectedly.*

Lady Grave. Oh, mighty well, sir! I am very glad we are at last come to a right understanding, the only way I have long wished for; not but I'd have you to know I see your design through all your painted ease of resignation: I know you'd give your soul to make me uneasy now.

Sir Cha. Oh fie, madam! upon my word, I would not make you uneasy, if it were in my power.

Lady Grave. Oh, dear sir, you need not take such care, upon my word; you'll find I can part with you without the least disorder: I'll try, at least; and so, once more, and for ever, sir, your servant: not but you must give me leave to tell you, as my last thought of you, too, that I do think—you are a villain. [*Exit hastily.*

Sir Cha. Oh, your very humble servant, madam! [*Bowing low.*] What a charming quality a woman's pride, that is strong enough to relieve a man her favours, when he's weary of them—Ah!

Re-enter Lady GRAVEAIRS.

Lady Grave. Look you, Sir Charles; don't presume upon the easiness of my temper; for, to convince you that I am positively in earnest: this matter, I desire you would let me have the letters you have had of mine since you came to Windsor; and I expect you'll return the rest, as I will yours, as soon as we come to London.

Sir Cha. Upon my faith, madam, I never kept any; I always put snuff in them, and so they wear out.

Lady Grave. Sir Charles, I must have them; for, positively, I won't stir without them.

Sir Cha. Ha! then, I must be civil, I see. [*Aside.*] Perhaps, madam, I have no mind to part with them—or you.

Lady Grave. Look you, sir, all those soft things are in vain, now there's an end of everything between us—If you say you won't give them, I must e'en get them as well as I can.

Sir Cha. Ha! that won't do then, I find. [*Aside.*

Lady Grave. Who's there? Mrs Edging—Your keeping a letter, sir, won't keep me, I assure you.

Enter EDGING.

Edg. Did your ladyship call me, madam?

Lady Grave. Ay, child: pray, do me the favour to fetch my cloak out of the dining-room.

Edg. Yes, madam.

Sir Cha. Oh, then there's hope again. [*Aside.*

Edg. Ha! she looks as if my master had quarrelled with her; I hope she's going away in a huff—she sha'n't stay for her cloak, I warrant her——This is pure. [*Aside. Exit smiling.*

Lady Grave. Pray, Sir Charles, before I go give me leave now, after all, to ask you—why you have used me thus?

Sir Cha. What is it you call usage, madam?

Lady Grave. Why, then, since you will have it, how comes it you have been so grossly careless and neglectful of me of late? Only tell me, seriously, wherein I have deserved this?

Sir Cha. Why, then, seriously, madam——

Re-enter EDGING, *with a cloak.*

We are interrupted——

Edg. Here is your ladyship's cloak, madam.

Lady Grave. Thank you, Mrs Edging—Oh, la! pray will you let somebody get me a chair to the door?

Edg. Humph—She might have told me that before, if she had been in such a haste to go. [*Aside. Exit.*

Lady Grave. Now, sir.

Sir Cha. Then, seriously, I say I am of late grown so very lazy in my pleasures, that I had rather lose a woman, than go through the plague and trouble of having or keeping her; and, to be

free, I have found so much, even in my acquaintance with you, whom I confess to be a mistress in the art of pleasing, that I am, from henceforth, resolved to follow no pleasure that rises above the degree of amusement—And that woman that expects I should make her my business, why—like my business, is then in a fair way of being forgot. When once she comes to reproach me with vows, and usage, and stuff—I had as lief hear her talk of bills, bonds, and ejectments: her passion becomes as troublesome as a law-suit, and I would as soon converse with my solicitor. In short, I shall never care sixpence for any woman that won't be obedient.

Lady Grave. I'll swear, sir, you have a very free way of treating people; I am glad I am so well acquainted with your principles, however—And you would have me obedient!

Sir Cha. Why not? My wife's so; and I think she has as much pretence to be proud as your ladyship.

Lady Grave. Lard! is there no chair to be had, I wonder?

Enter EDGING.

Edg. Here's a chair, madam.

Lady Grave. 'Tis very well, Mrs Edging:—pray, will you let somebody get me a glass of fair water?

Edg. Humph—her huff is almost over, I suppose—I see he's a villain still. [*Aside. Exit.*

Lady Grave. Well, that was the prettiest fancy about obedience, sure, that ever was. Certainly, a woman of condition must be infinitely happy under the dominion of so generous a lover. But how came you to forget kicking and whipping all this while? Methinks, you should not have left so fashionable an article out of your scheme of government.

Sir Cha. Um——No, there is too much trouble in that; though I have known them of admirable use in reformation of some humoursome gentlewomen.

Lady Grave. But one thing more, and I have done——Pray, what degree of spirit must the lady have, that is to make herself happy under so much freedom, order, and tranquility?

Sir Cha. Oh, she must at least have as much spirit as your ladyship, or she'd give me no pleasure in breaking it.

Lady Grave. No, that would be troublesome. You had better take one that's broken to your hand: there are such souls to be hired, I believe; things that will rub your temples in an evening, till you fall fast asleep in their laps; creatures, too, that think their wages their reward. I fancy, at last, that will be the best method for the lazy passion of a married man, that has outlived his any other sense of gratification.

Sir Cha. Look you, madam; I have loved you very well a great while; now you would have me love you better and longer, which is not in my power to do; and I don't think there is any plague upon earth like a dun that comes for more money than one is ever likely to be able to pay.

Lady Grave. A dun! Do you take me for a dun, sir? Do I come a dunning to you?

[*Walks in a heat.*

Sir Cha. Hist! don't expose yourself—here's company ——

Lady Grave I care not—A dun! you shall see, sir, I can revenge an affront, though I despise the wretch that offers it——A dun! Oh, I could die with laughing at the fancy! [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. So—she's in admirable order—Here comes my lord; and, I'm afraid, in the very nick of his occasion for her.

Enter Lord MORELOVE.

Ld More. Oh, Charles, undone again! all is lost and ruined.

Sir Cha. What's the matter now?

Ld More. I have been playing the fool yonder, even to contempt; my senseless jealousy has confessed a weakness I never shall forgive myself. She has insulted on it to that degree, too—I cann't bear the thought——Oh, Charles, this devil is mistress of my heart! and I could dash my brains out to think how grossly too I have let her know it.

Sir Cha. Ah, how it would tickle her if she saw you in this condition! ha, ha, ha!

Ld More. Pr'ythee don't torture me: think of some present ease, or I shall burst.

Sir Cha. Well, well; let's hear, pray—What has she done to you? Ha, ha!

Ld More. Why, ever since I left you, she has treated me with so much coolness and ill nature, and that thing of a lord with so much laughing ease, such an acquainted, such a spiteful familiarity, that, at the last, she saw and triumphed in my uneasiness.

Sir Cha. Well, and so you left the room in a pet? Ha!

Ld More. Oh, worse, worse still! for, at last, with half shame and anger in my looks, I thrust myself between my lord and her, pressed her by the hand, and in a whisper, trembling, begged her, in pity of herself and me, to shew her good humour, only where she knew it was truly valued: at which she broke from me, with a cold smile, sat her down by the peer, whispered him, and burst into a loud laughter in my face.

Sir Cha. Ha, ha! then would I have given fifty pounds to have seen your face. Why, what in the name of common sense had you to do with humility? Will you never have enough on't? Death! 'twas setting a lighted match to gunpowder, to blow yourself up.

Ld More. I see my folly now, Charles. But what shall I do with the remains of life that she has left me?

Sir Cha. Oh, throw it at her feet, by all means! put on your tragedy face, catch fast hold of her petticoat, whip out your handkerchief, and, in point blank verse, desire her, one way or other, to make an end of the business. [*In a whining tone.*

Ld More. What a fool dost thou make me!

Sir Cha. I only can shew you as you came out of her hands, my lord.

Ld More. How contemptibly have I behaved myself!

Sir Cha. That's according as you bear her behaviour.

Ld More. Bear it! no—I thank thee, Charles; thou has waked me now: and, if I bear it—— What have you done with my lady Graveairs?

Sir Cha. Your business, I believe——She's ready for you; she's just gone down stairs, and, if you don't make haste after her, I expect her back again, with a knife or a pistol presently.

Ld More. I'll go this minute.

Sir Cha. No, stay a little: here comes my lord; we'll see what we can get out of him first.

Ld More. Methinks, now, I could laugh at her.

Enter Lord FOPPINGTON.

Ld Fop. Nay, pr'ythee, Sir Charles, let's have a little of thee——We have been so *chagrin* without thee, that, stop my breath, the ladies are gone half asleep to church for want of thy company.

Sir Cha. That's hard, indeed, while your lordship was among them. Is Lady Betty gone, too?

Ld Fop. She was just upon the wing; but I caught her by the snuff-box, and she pretends to stay, to see if I'll give it her again, or no.

Ld More. Death! 'tis that I gave her, and the only present she would ever receive from me ——Ask him how he came by it.

[*Aside to Sir* CHARLES.

Sir Cha. Pr'ythee don't be uneasy——Did she give it you, my lord?

Ld Fop. Faith, Charles, I cann't say she did, or she did not; but we were playing the fool, and I took it——à la—Pshaw! I cann't tell thee in French neither; but Horace touches it to a nicety—'twas *pignus direptum malè pertinaci.*

Ld More. So—but I must bear it——If your lordship has a mind to the box, I'll stand by you in keeping of it.

Ld Fop. My lord, I am passionately obliged to you; but I am afraid I cannot answer your hazarding so much of the lady's favour.

Ld More. Not at all, my lord: 'tis possible I may not have the same regard to her frown that your lordship has.

Ld Fop. That's a bite, I am sure—he'd give a joint of his little finger to be as well with her as I am. [*Aside.*] But here she comes—Charles, stand by me——Must not a man be a vain coxcomb, now, to think this creature followed one?

Sir Cha. Nothing so plain, my lord.

Ld Fop. Flattering devil!

Enter Lady BETTY.

Lady Bet. Pshaw, my lord Foppington! pr'ythee, don't play the fool now, but give me my snuff-box—Sir Charles, help me to take it from him.

Sir Cha. You know I hate trouble, madam.

Lady Bet. Pooh! you'll make me say all prayers are half over now.

Ld Fop. If you'll promise me not to go to church, I'll give it you.

Lady Bet. I'll promise nothing at all; but positively, I will have it. [*Struggling with him.*

Ld Fop. Then, comparatively, I won't part with it. Ha, ha! [*Struggle with her.*

Lady Bet. Oh, you devil, you have killed my arm! Oh!——Well, if you'll let me have it, I'll give you a better.

Ld More. Oh, Charles! that has a view of distant kindness in it. [*Aside to Sir* CHARLES.

Ld Fop. Nay, now, I keep it superlatively—I find there's a secret value in it.

Lady Bet. O, dismal! Upon my word, I am only ashamed to give it to you. Do you think I would offer such an odious fancied thing to any body I had the least value for?

Sir Cha. Now it comes a little nearer, methinks it does not seem to be any kindness at all.

[*Aside to Lord* MORELOVE.

Ld Fop. Why, really, madam, upon second view, it has not extremely the mode of a lady's utensil. Are you sure it never held any thing but snuff?

Lady Bet. Oh, you monster!

Ld Fop. Nay, I only ask, because it seems to me to have very much the air and fancy of Monsieur Smoakandsot's tobacco-box.

Ld More. I can bear no more.

Sir Cha. Why, don't, then: I'll step in to the company, and return to your relief immediately.

[*Exit Sir* CHA.

Ld More. [*To Lady* BET.] Come, madam, will your ladyship give me leave to end the difference? Since the slightness of the thing may let you bestow it without any mark of favour, shall I beg it of your ladyship.

Lady Bet. Oh, my lord, nobody sooner—I beg you give it, my lord.

[*Looking earnestly on Lord* FOP. who *smiling, gives it to Lord* MORE. *and then bows gravely to her.*

Ld More. Only to have the honour of restoring it to your lordship; and if there be any other trifle of mine your lordship has a fancy to, though it were a mistress, I don't know any person in the world that has so good a claim to my resignation.

Ld Fop. Oh, my lord, this generosity will distract me!

Ld More. My lord, I do you but common justice. But from your conversation, I had never known the true value of the sex. You positively understand them the best of any man breathing; therefore, I think every one of common prudence ought to resign to you.

Ld Fop. Then, positively, your lordship is the most obliging person in the world; for I'm sure your judgment can never like any woman that is not the finest creature in the universe.

[*Bowing to Lady* BET.

Ld More. Oh, your lordship does me too

much honour! I have the worst judgment in the world; no man has been more deceived in it.

Ld Fop. Then your lordship, I presume, has been apt to chuse in a mask, or by candle-light?

Ld More. In a mask, indeed, my lord, and, of all masks, the most dangerous.

Ld Fop. Pray, what's that, my lord?

Ld More. A bare face.

Ld Fop. Your lordship will pardon me, if I don't so readily comprehend how a woman's bare face can hide her face.

Ld More. It often hides her heart, my lord; and therefore I think it sometimes a more dangerous mask than a piece of velvet: that's rather a mark, than a disguise, of an ill woman. But the mischiefs skulking behind a beauteous form give no warning; they are always sure, fatal, and innumerable.

Lady Bet. Oh, barbarous aspersion! My lord Foppington, have you nothing to say for the poor women?

Ld Fop. I must confess, madam, nothing of this nature ever happened in my course of amours. I always judge the beauteous part of a woman to be the most agreeable part of her composition; and when once a lady does me the honour to toss that into my arms, I think myself obliged, in good nature, not to quarrel about the rest of her equipage.

Lady Bet. Why, ay, my lord, there's some good humour in that, now.

Ld More. He's happy in a plain English stomach, madam; I could recommend a dish that's perfectly to your lordship's *goût*, where beauty is the only sauce to it.

Lady Bet. So——

Ld Fop. My lord, when my wine's right, I never care it should be zested.

Ld More. I know some ladies would thank you for that opinion.

Lady Bet. My lord Morelove is really grown such a churl to the women, I don't only think he is not, but cann't conceive how he ever could be in love.

Ld More. Upon my word, madam, I once thought I was. [*Smiling.*

Lady Bet. Fie, fie! how could you think so? I fancy now you had only a mind to domineer over some poor creature, and so you thought you were in love, ha, ha!

Ld More. The lady I loved, madam, grew so unfortunate in her conduct, that, at last, she brought me to treat her with the same indifference and civility as I now pay your ladyship.

Lady Bet. And, ten to one, just at that time she never thought you such tolerable company.

Ld More. That I cann't say, madam; for, at that time, she grew so affected, there was no judging of her thoughts at all. [*Mimicking her.*

Lady Bet. What, and so you left the poor lady! Oh, you inconstant creature!

Ld More. No, madam, to have loved her on had been inconstancy; for she was never two hours together the same woman.

[*Lady* BET. *and Ld* MORE. *seem to talk.*

Ld Fop. [*Aside.*] Ha, ha, ha! I see he has a mind to abuse her: so I'll even give him an opportunity of doing his business with her at once for ever—My lord, I perceive your lordship is going to be good company to the lady; and, for her sake, I don't think it good manners in me to disturb you——

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Cha. My lord Foppington——

Ld Fop. Oh, Charles! I was just wanting thee——Hark thee—I have three thousand secrets for thee—I have made such discoveries! to tell thee all in one word, Morelove's as jealous of me as the devil, he, he, he!

Sir Cha. Is it possible? Has she given him any occasion?

Ld Fop. Only rallied him to death upon my account; she told me, within, just now, she'd use him like a dog, and begged me to draw off for an opportunity.

Sir Cha. Oh, keep in, while the scent lics, and she is your own, my lord.

Ld Fop. I cann't tell that, Charles; but I am sure she is fairly unharboured; and when once I throw off my inclinations, I usually follow them till the game has enough on't: and, between thee and I, she is pretty well blown, too; she cann't stand long, I believe; for, curse catch me, if I have not rid down half a thousand pounds after her already.

Sir Cha. What do you mean?

Ld Fop. I have lost five hundred to her at piquet since dinner.

Sir Cha. You are a fortunate man, faith! you are resolved not to be thrown out, I see.

Ld Fop. Hang it, what should a man come out for, if he does not keep up to the sport?

Sir Cha. Well pushed, my lord.

Ld Fop. Tayo! have at her——

Sir Cha. Down, down, my lord——ah! 'ware haunches!

Ld Fop. Ah, Charles! [*Embracing him.*] Pr'ythee, let's observe a little: there's a foolish cur, now I have run her to a stand, has a mind to be at her by himself, and thou shalt see, she won't stir out of her way for him.

[*They stand aside.*

Ld More. Ha, ha! your ladyship is very grave of a sudden; you look as if your lover had insolently recovered his common sense.

Lady Bet. And your lordship is so very gay and unlike yourself, one would swear you were just come from the pleasure of making your mistress afraid of you.

Ld More. No, faith, quite contrary; for, do you know, madam, I have just found out, that, upon your account, I have made myself one of the most ridiculous puppies upon the face of the earth——I have, upon my faith—nay, and so extravagantly such, ha, ha, ha! that it is at last become a jest even to myself; and I cann't help laughing at it for the soul of me, ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. I want to cure him of that laugh, now. [*Aside.*] My lord, since you are so genc-

rous, I'll tell you another secret—Do you know, too, that I still find, (spite of all your great wisdom, and my contemptible qualities, as you are pleased, now and then, to call them) do you know, I say, that I see, under all this, that you still love me with the same helpless passion? and can your vast foresight imagine I won't use you accordingly for these extraordinary airs you are pleased to give yourself?

Ld More. Oh, by all means, madam! 'tis fit you should; and I expect it, whenever it is in your power—Confusion! [*Aside.*

Lady Bet. My lord, you have talked to me this half hour, without confessing pain. [*Pauses, and affects to gape.*] Only remember it.

Ld More. Hell and tortures!

Lady Bet. What did you say, my lord?

Ld More. Fire and furies!

Lady Bet. Ha, ha! he's disordered—Now I am easy——My lord Foppington, have you a mind to your revenge at piquet?

Ld Fop. I have always a mind to an opportunity of entertaining your ladyship, madam.

[*Lady* BET. *coquettes with Lord* FOP.

Ld More. Oh, Charles! the insolence of woman might furnish out a thousand devils.

Sir Cha. And your temper is enough to furnish out a thousand such women. Come away; I have business for you upon the Terrace.

Ld More. Let me but speak one word to her.

Sir Cha. Not a syllable. The tongue's a weapon you'll always have the worst at; for I see you have no guard, and she carries a devilish edge.

Lady Bet. My lord, don't let any thing I have said frighten you away; for, if you have the least inclination to stay and rail, you know the old conditions; 'tis but your asking me pardon the next day, and you may give your passion any liberty you think fit.

Ld More. Daggers and death!

Sir Cha. Is the man distracted?

Ld More. Let me speak to her now, or I shall burst.

Sir Cha. Upon condition you'll speak no more of her to me, my lord, do as you please.

Ld More. Pr'ythee, pardon me——I know not what to do.

Sir Cha. Come along; I'll set you to work, I warrant you—Nay, nay, none of your parting ogles——Will you go?

Ld More. Yes——and I hope for ever——

[*Exit Sir* CHA. *pulling away Lord* MORE.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha! Did ever mortal monster set up for a lover with such unfortunate qualifications?

Lady Bet. Indeed, my lord Morelove has something strangely singular in his manner.

Ld Fop. I thought I should have burst to see the creature pretend to rally, and give himself the airs of one of us—But, run me through, madam, your ladyship pushed like a fencing-master! that last thrust was a *coup de grace*, I believe: I'm afraid his honour will hardly meet your ladyship in haste again.

Lady Bet. Not unless his second, Sir Charles, keeps him better in practice, perhaps——Well, the humour of this creature has done me good service to-day. I must keep it up, for fear of a second engagement &c.

Ld Fop. Never was poor wit so foiled at its own weapon, sure!

Lady Bet. Wit! had he ever any pretence to't?

Ld Fop. Ha, ha! he has not much in on, I think, though he wears the reputation of a very pretty young fellow among some sort of people but strike me stupid if ever I could discover common sense in all the progress of his amours: he expects a woman should like him for endeavouring to convince her that she has not one good quality belonging to the whole composition of her soul and body.

Lady Bet. That, I suppose, is only in a modest hope, that she'll mend her faults, to qualify herself for his vast merit, ha, ha!

Ld Fop. Poor Morelove! I see she can't endure him. &c.

Lady Bet. Or if one really had all those, he does not consider, that sincerity in love is as much out of fashion as sweet snuff; nobody uses it now.

Ld Fop. Oh, no mortal, madam, unless a be here and there a squire, that's making his addresses court to the cherry-cheek charms of my lord mayor's shop's great fat daughter in the country.

Lady Bet. O what a surfeiting couple are we put together!——

[*Throwing her hand carelessly upon his.*

Ld Fop. Fond of me, by all that's tender.—Poor fool! I'll give thee cause immediately. [*Aside.*] But, madam, you were pleased just now to offer me my revenge at piquet—Now, there's nobody within, and I think we can't make use of a better opportunity.

Lady Bet. O! no: not now, my lord!——I have a favour I would fain beg of you first.

Ld Fop. But time, madam, is very precious in this place, and I shall not easily forgive myself if I don't take him by the forelock.

Lady Bet. But I have a great mind to have a little more sport with my lord Morelove first, and would fain beg your assistance.

Ld Fop. O! with all my heart; and, upon second thoughts, I don't know but piquing a rival in public may be as good sport as being well with a mistress in private; for, after all, the pleasure of a fine woman is like that of her virtue, not so much in the thing, as the reputation of having it. [*Aside.*] Well, madam, but how can I serve you in this affair?

Lady Bet. Why, methought, as my lord Morelove went out, he shewed a stern resentment in his look, that seemed to threaten me with rebellion and downright defiance. Now, I have a great fancy that you and I should follow him to the Terrace, and laugh at his resolution before he has time to put it in practice.

Ld Fop. And so punish his fault before he commits it! ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. Nay, we won't give him time, if his courage should fail, to repent it.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha! let me blood, if I don't long to be at it, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. O! 'twill be such diversion to see him bite his lips, and broil within, only with seeing us ready to split our sides in laughing at nothing! ha, ha!

Ld Fop. Ha, ha! I see the creature does really like me. [*Aside.*] And then, madam, to hear him hum a broken piece of a tune, in affectation of his not minding us—'twill be so foolish, when we know he loves us to death all the while, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. And if, at last, his sage mouth should open in surly contradiction of our humour, then will we, in pure opposition to his, immediately fall foul upon every thing that is not gallant and fashionable: constancy shall be the mark of age and ugliness, virtue a jest, we'll rally discretion out of doors, lay gravity at our feet, and only love, free love, disorder, liberty, and pleasure, be our standing principles.

Ld Fop. Madam, you transport me! for if ever I was obliged to nature for any one tolerable qualification, 'twas positively the talent of being exuberantly pleasant upon this subject—I am impatient—my fancy's upon the wing already—let's fly to him.

Lady Bet. No, no; stay till I am just got out; our going together won't be so proper.

Ld Fop. As your ladyship pleases, madam; but, when this affair is over, you won't forget that I have a certain revenge due.

Lady Bet. Ay, ay! after supper I am for you—Nay, you sha'n't stir a step, my lord!——

[*Seeing her to the door.*

Ld Fop. Only to tell you, you have fixed me yours to the last existence of my soul's eternal entity.———

Lady Bet. O, your servant. [*Exit.*

Ld Fop. Ha, ha! stark mad for me, by all that's handsome! Poor Morelove! That a fellow, who has ever been abroad, should think a woman of her spirit is to be taken by a regular siege, as the confederates do towns, when so many of the French successes might have shewn him, the surest way is to whisper the governor. How can a coxcomb give himself the fatigue of bombarding a woman's understanding, when he may with so much ease make a friend of her constitution. I'll see if I can shew him a little French play with Lady Betty—let me see—ay, I'll make an end of it the old way, get her into piquet at her own lodgings—not mind one tittle of my play—give her every game before she's half up, that she may judge of the strength of my inclination by my haste of losing up to her price; then, of a sudden, with a familiar leer, cry—rat piquet—sweep counters, cards, and money all upon the floor, et donc—l'affaire est faite. [*Exit.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Castle Terrace.*

Enter Lady BETTY *and Lady* EASY.

Lady Easy. My dear, you really talk to me as if I were your lover, and not your friend: or else I am so dull, that by all you've said I cann't make the least guess at your real thoughts—Can you be serious for a moment?

Lady Bet. Not easily; but I would do more to oblige you.

Lady Easy. Then, pray, deal ingenuously, and tell me, without reserve, are you sure you don't love my lord Morelove?

Lady Bet. Then, seriously—I think not—But because I won't be positive, you shall judge by the worst of my symptoms—First, I own I like his conversation—his person has neither fault nor beauty—well enough—I don't remember I ever secretly wished myself married to him, or—that I ever seriously resolved against it.

Lady Easy. Well, so far you are tolerably safe: But come; as to his manner of addressing you, what effect has that had?

Lady Bet. I am not a little pleased to observe few men follow a woman with the same fatigue and spirit that he does me——am more pleased when he lets me use him ill; and if ever I have a favourable thought of him, 'tis when I see he cann't bear that usage.

Lady Easy. Have a care; that last is a dangerous symptom—he pleases your pride, I find.

Lady Bet. Oh! perfectly; in that, I own, no mortal ever can come up to him.

Lady Easy. But now, my dear! now comes the main point—jealousy! Are you sure you have never been touched with it? Tell me that, with a safe conscience, and then I pronounce you clear.

Lady Bet. Nay, then, I defy him; for, positively, I was never jealous in my life.

Lady Easy. How, madam! you have never been stirred enough, to think a woman strangely forward for being a little familiar in talk with him? Or, are you sure his gallantry to another never gave you the least disorder? Were you never, upon no accident, in an apprehension of losing him?

Lady Bet. Ha! Why, madam—Bless me! why—wh—why, sure, you don't call this jealousy, my dear?

Lady Easy. Nay, nay, that is not the business—Have you ever felt any thing of this nature, madam?

Lady Bet. Lord! don't be so hasty, my dear—any thing of this nature—O lud! I swear I don't like it: dear creature, bring me off here; for I am half frighted out of my w ts!

Lady Easy. Nay, if you can rally upon it, your wound is not over deep, I'm afraid.

Lady Bet. Well, that's comfortably said, however.

Lady Easy. But come to the point—How far have you been jealous?

Lady Bet. Why, O, bless me! He gave the music one night to my lady Languish here upon the Terrace: and (though she and I were very great friends) I remember I could not speak to her in a week for't——Oh!

Lady Easy. Nay, now, you may laugh if you can; for, take my word, the marks are upon you ——But come, what else?

Lady Bet. O, nothing else, upon my word, my dear!

Lady Easy. Well, one word more, and then I give sentence: suppose you were heartily convinced that he actually followed another woman?

Lady Bet. But pray, my dear, what occasion is there to suppose any such a thing at all?

Lady Easy. Guilty, upon my honour!

Lady Bet. Pshaw! I defy him to say that ever I owned any inclination for him.

Lady Easy. No, but you have given him terrible leave to guess it.

Lady Bet. If ever you see us meet again, you'll have but little reason to think so, I can assure you.

Lady Easy. That I shall see presently; for here comes Sir Charles, and I'm sure my lord cannot be far off.

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Cha. Servant, Lady Betty——my dear, how do you do?

Lady Easy. At your service, my dear—But pray, what have you done with my lord Morelove?

Lady Bet. Ay, Sir Charles; pray, how does your pupil do? Have you any hopes of him? Is he docible?

Sir Cha. Well, madam, to confess your triumph over me, as well as him, I own my hopes of him are lost. I offered what I could to his instruction, but he is incorrigibly yours, and undone—and the news, I presume, does not displease your ladyship.

Lady Bet. Fie, fie, Sir Charles, you disparage your friend; I am afraid you don't take pains with him.

Sir Cha. Ha! I fancy, Lady Betty, your good nature won't let you sleep a nights: don't you love dearly to hurt people?

Lady Bet. O! your servant: then, without a jest, the man is so unfortunate in his want of patience, that, let me die, if I don't often pity him.

Sir Cha. Ha! Strange goodness—O that I were your lover for a month or two!

Lady Bet. What then?

Sir Cha. I would make that pretty heart's blood of yours ache in a fortnight.

Lady Bet. Huh! I should hate you: your assurance would make your addresses intolerable.

Sir Cha. I believe it would, for I'd never address you at all.

Lady Bet. O! you clown you!

[*Hitting him with her fan.*

Sir Cha. Why, what to do? to feed a decayed pride, that's eternally breaking out in the affectation of an ill nature, that—in my conscience, I believe is but affectation.

Lady Bet. You or your friend have no great reason to complain of my fondness, I believe—Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Cha. [*Looking earnestly at her.*] Thou insolent creature! How can you make a jest of a man whose whole life's but one continued torment from your want of common gratitude?

Lady Bet. Torment! for my part I really believe him as easy as you are.

Sir Cha. Poor intolerable affectation! You know the contrary; you know him blindly yours; you know your power, and the whole pleasure of your life's the poor and low abuse of it.

Lady Bet. Pray, how do I abuse it—if I have any power?

Sir Cha. You drive him to extremes that make him mad, then punish him for acting against his reason; you've almost turned his brain; his common judgment fails him; he is now, at this very moment, driven by his despair upon a project, a hopes to free him from your power, that is sensible, and so must every one be that has the sense, of course must ruin him with you for ever. I almost blush to think of it; yet your unreasonable disdain has forced him to do it; and should he now suspect I offered but a hint of it to you, and in contempt of his design, I know he'd cost my life to answer it: but I have no regard: men in madness; I rather choose, for once, to trust in your good nature, in hopes the man, whom your unwary beauty had made miserable, your generosity would scorn to make ridiculous.

Lady Bet. Sir Charles, you charge me very home; I never had it in my inclination to make any thing ridiculous that did not deserve it.—Pray, what is this business you think so extravagant in him?

Sir Cha. Something so absurdly rash and bold, you'll hardly forgive even me that tell it you.

Lady Bet. O fie! If it be a fault, Sir Charles, I shall consider it as his, not yours. Pray, what is it?

Lady Easy. I long to know, methinks.

Sir Cha. You may be sure he did not want my dissuasions from it.

Lady Bet. Let us hear it.

Sir Cha. Why, this man, whom I have known to love you with such excess of generous desire; whom I have heard, in his ecstatic praises of your beauty, talk, till, from the soft heat of his distilling thoughts, the tears have fallen——

Lady Bet. O! Sir Charles—— [*Blushing.*

Sir Cha. Nay, grudge not, since 'tis past, to hear what was (though you contemned it) once his merit: but now, I own, that merit ought to be forgotten.

Lady Bet. Pray, sir, be plain.

Sir Cha. This man, I say, whose unhappy passion has so ill succeeded with you, at last has

forfeited all his hopes (into which, pardon me, I confess my friendship had lately flattered him) his hopes of even deserving now your lowest pity or regard.

Lady Bet. You amaze me! For I cann't suppose his utmost malice dares assault my reputation—and what—

Sir Cha. No, but he maliciously presumes the world will do it for him; and, indeed, he has taken no unlikely means to make them busy with their tongues; for he is this moment upon the open terrace, in the highest public gallantry with my lady Graveairs. And to convince the world and me, he said, he was not the tame lover we fancied him, he'd venture to give her music to-night: nay, I heard him, before my face, speak to one of the hautboys to engage the rest, and desired they would all take their directions only from my lady Graveairs.

Lady Bet. My lady Graveairs! truly I think my lord's very much in the right on't—for my part, Sir Charles, I don't see any thing in this that's so very ridiculous, nor indeed that ought to make me think either the better or the worse of him for't.

Sir Cha. Pshaw! pshaw! madam, you and I know 'tis not in his power to renounce you; this is but the poor disguise of a resenting passion, vainly ruffled to a storm, which the least gentle look from you can reconcile at will, and laugh into a calm again.

Lady Bet. Indeed, Sir Charles, I sha'n't give myself that trouble, I believe.

Sir Cha. So I told him, madam: are not all your complaints, said I, already owing to her pride? and can you suppose this public defiance of it (which you know you cann't make good, too) won't incense her more against you?—That's what I'd have, said he, staring wildly; I care not what becomes of me, so I but live to see her piqued at it.

Lady Bet. Upon my word, I fancy my lord will find himself mistaken—I sha'n't be piqued, I believe—I must first have a value for the thing I lose, before it piques me: piqued! ha, ha, ha! [*Disordered.*

Sir Cha. Madam, you've said the very thing I urged to him. I know her temper so well, said I, that though she doated on you, if you once stood out against her, she'd sooner burst, than shew the least motion of uneasiness.

Lady Bet. I can assure you, Sir Charles, my lord won't find himself deceived in your opinion—piqued!

Sir Cha. She has it. [*Aside.*

Lady Easy. Alas, poor woman! how little do our passions make us!

Lady Bet. Not but I would advise him to have a little regard to my reputation in this business; I would have him take heed of publicly affronting me.

Sir Cha. Right, madam; that's what I strictly warned him of; for, among friends, whenever the world sees him follow another woman, the malicious tea-tables will be very apt to be free with your ladyship.

Lady Bet. I'd have him consider that, methinks.

Sir Cha. But, alas! madam, 'tis not in his power to think with reason; his mad resentment has destroyed even his principles of common honesty: he considers nothing but a senseless proud revenge, which, in his fit of lunacy, 'tis impossible that either threats or danger can dissuade him from.

Lady Bet. What! does he defy me, threaten me! then he shall see that I have passions too, and know, as well as he, to stir my heart against any pride that dares insult me. Does he suppose I fear him? Fear the little malice of a slighted passion, that my own scorn has stung into a despised resentment! Fear him! O! it provokes me to think he dare have such a thought!

Lady Easy. Dear creature, don't disorder yourself so.

Lady Bet. Let me but live to see him once more within my power, and I'll forgive the rest of fortune.

Lady Easy. Well, I am certainly very ill-natured; for though I see this news has disturbed my friend, I cann't help being pleased with my hopes of my lady Graveairs being otherwise disposed of. [*Aside.*] My dear, I am afraid you have provoked her a little too far.

Sir Cha. Oh! not at all——You shall see—I'll sweeten her, and she'll cool like a dish of tea.

Lady Bet. I may see him with his complaining face again—

Sir Cha. I am sorry, madam, you so wrongly judge of what I've told you; I was in hopes to have stirred your pity, not your anger: I little thought your generosity would punish him for faults, which you yourself resolved he should commit————Yonder he comes, and all the world with him: might I advise you, madam, you should not resent the thing at all——I would not so much as stay to see him in his fault; nay, I'd be the last that heard of it: nothing can sting him more, or so justly punish his folly, as your utter neglect of it.

Lady Easy. Come, dear creature, be persuaded, and go home with me. Indeed it will shew more indifference to avoid him.

Lady Bet. No, madam, I'll oblige his vanity for once, and stay to let him see how strongly he has piqued me.

Sir Cha. [*Aside.*] O not at all to speak of; you had as good part with a little of that pride of yours, or I shall yet make it a very troublesome companion to you.

[*Goes from them, and whispers Lord* MORELOVE.

Enter Lord FOPPINGTON; *a little after, Lord* MORELOVE *and Lady* GRAVEAIRS.

Ld Fop. Ladies, your servant——O! we have wanted you beyond reparation——such diversion!

Lady Bet. Well! my lord! have you seen my lord Morelove?

Ld Fop. Seen him! ha, ha, ha!—O! I have such things to tell you, madam——you'll die—

Lady Bet. O, pray let's hear them! I was never in a better humour to receive them.

Ld Fop. Hark you. [*They whisper.*

Ld More. So, she's engaged already. [*To Sir* CHA.

Sir Cha. So much the better; make but a just advantage of my success, and she's undone.

Ld Fop. } Ha, ha ha!
Lady Bet. }

Sir Cha. You see already what ridiculous pains she is taking to stir your jealousy, and cover her own.

Ld Fop. } Ha, ha, ha!
Lady Bet. }

Ld More. O, never fear me; for upon my word, it now appears ridiculous even to me.

Sir Cha. And, hark you— [*Whispers Lord* MORE.

Lady Bet. And so the widow was as full of airs as his lordship?

Sir Cha. Only observe that, and it is impossible you can fail. [*Aside.*

Ld More. Dear Charles, you have convinced me, and I thank you.

Lady Grave. My lord Morelove! What, do you leave us?

Ld More. Ten thousand pardons, madam! I was but just—

Lady Grave. Nay, nay, no excuses, my lord, so you will but let us have you again.

Sir Cha. [*Aside to Lady* GRAVEAIRS.]—I see you have good humour, madam, when you like your company.

Lady Grave. And you, I see, for all your mighty thirst of dominion, could stoop to be obedient, if one thought it worth one's while to make you so.

Sir Cha. Ha! power would make her an admirable tyrant. [*Aside.*

Lady Easy. [*Observing Sir* CHARLES *and Lady* GRAVEAIRS.]—So! there's another couple have quarrelled, too, I find—Those airs to my lord Morelove look as if designed to recover Sir Charles into jealousy: I'll endeavour to join the company, and, it may be, that will let me into the secret.—[*Aside.*]—My lord Foppington, I vow this is very uncomplaisant, to engross so agreeable a part of the company to yourself.

Sir Cha. Nay, my lord, this is not fair, indeed, to enter into secrets among friends! Ladies, what say you? I think we ought to declare against it.

Lady Bet. Well, ladies, I ought only to ask your pardon: my lord's excuseable, for I would haul him into a corner.

Ld Fop. I swear 'tis very hard, ho! I observe, two people of extreme condition can no sooner grow particular, but the multitude of both sexes are immediately up, and think their properties invaded——

Lady Bet. Odious multitude!

Ld Fop. Perish the canaille!

Lady Grave. Oh, my lord, we women have all reason to be jealous of Lady Betty Modish's power.

Ld More. [*To Lady* BETTY.]—As the case, madam, all have of my lord Foppington: besides, favourites of great merit discourage those of an inferior class for their prince's service; he has already lost you one of your retinue, madam.

Lady Bet. Not at all, my lord; he has only made room for another: one must sometimes make vacancies, or there could be no preferments.

Lady Easy. Ha, ha, ha! Ladies' favours, my lord, like places at court, are not always held for life, you know.

Lady Bet. No, indeed! if they were, the poor fine women would be always used like their wives, and no more minded than the business of the nation.

Lady Easy. Have a care, madam: an undeserving favourite has been the ruin of many a prince's empire.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my soul, Lady Betty, we must grow more discreet; for, positively, if we go on at this rate, we shall have the world throw you under the scandal of constancy: and I shall have all the swords of condition at my throat for a monopolist.

Ld More. Oh! there's no great fear of that, my lord; though the men of sense give it over, there will be always some idle fellows vain enough to believe their merit may succeed as well as your lordship's.

Lady Bet. Or, if they should not, my lord, cast lovers, you know, need not fear being long out of employment, while there are so many well-disposed people in the world—There are generally neglected wives, stale maids, or charitable widows, always ready to relieve the necessities of a disappointed passion——And, by the way, hark you, Sir Charles——

Ld More. [*Aside.*]—So! she's stirred, I see, for all her pains to hide it——She would have glanced an affront at a woman she was piqued at.

Lady Grave. [*Aside.*]—That wit was thrown at me, I suppose; but I'll return it.

Lady Bet. [*Softly to Sir* CHARLES.]—Pray, how come you all this while to trust your mistress so easily?

Sir Cha. One is not so apt, madam, to be alarmed at the liberties of an old acquaintance, as perhaps your ladyship ought to be at the resentment of an hard-used, honourable lover.

Lady Bet. Suppose I were alarmed, how does that make you easy?

Sir Cha. Come, come, be wise at last; my trusting them together may easily convince you, that (as I told you before) I know his addresses to her are only outward, and it will be your fault now, if you let him go on till the world thinks him in earnest, and a thousand busy tongues are set upon malicious inquiries into your reputation.

Lady Bet. Why, Sir Charles, do you suppose,

while he behaves himself as he does, that I won't convince him of my indifference?

Sir Cha. But hear me, madam——

Lady Grave. [*Aside.*]—The air of that whisper looks as if the lady had a mind to be making her peace again: and, 'tis possible, his worship's being so busy in the matter, too, may proceed as much from his jealousy of my lord with me, as friendship to her; at least I fancy so; therefore, I'm resolved to keep her still piqued, and prevent it, though it be only to gall him——Sir Charles, that is not fair to take a privilege you just now declared against in my lord Foppington.

Ld More. Well observed, madam.

Lady Grave. Besides, it looks so affected to whisper, when every body guesses the secret.

Ld More. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. Oh! madam, your pardon in particular: but it is possible you may be mistaken: the secrets of people, that have any regard to their actions, are not so soon guessed, as theirs that have made a confident of the whole town.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Grave. A coquette, in her affected airs of disdain to a revolted lover, I'm afraid, must exceed your ladyship in prudence, not to let the world see, at the same time, she'd give her eyes to make her peace with him: ha, ha, ha!

Ld More. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. 'Twould be a mortification, indeed, if it were in the power of a fading widow's charms to prevent it; and the man must be miserably reduced, sure, that could bear to live buried in woollen, or take up with the motherly comforts of a swan-skin petticoat. Ha, ha, ha!

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Grave. Widows, it seems, are not so squeamish to their interest; they know their own minds, and take the man they like, though it happens to be one that a froward, vain girl has disobliged, and is pining to be friends with.

Ld More. Nay, though it happens to be one that confesses he once was fond of a piece of folly, and afterwards ashamed on't.

Lady Bet. Nay, my lord, there's no standing against two of you.

Ld Fop. No, faith, that's odds at tennis, my lord: not but, if your ladyship pleases, I'll endeavour to keep your back-hand a little; though, upon my soul, you may safely set me up at the line: for, knock me down if ever I saw a rest of wit better played, than that last, in my life. What say you, madam? shall we engage?

Lady Bet. As you please, my lord.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha! Allons! tout de bon jouer, mi lor.

Ld More. Oh, pardon me, sir, I shall never think myself in any thing a match for the lady.

Ld Fop. To you, madam.

Lady Bet. That's much, my lord, when the world knows you have been so many years teasing me to play the fool with you.

Ld Fop. Ah, bien-joué—Ha, ha, ha!

Ld More. At that game, I confess, your ladyship has chosen a much properer person to improve your hand with.

Ld Fop. To me, madam—My lord, I presume whoever the lady thinks fit to play the fool with, will at least be able to give as much envy as the wise person that had not wit enough to keep well with her when he was so.

Lady Grave. O! my lord! Both parties must needs be greatly happy; for, I dare swear neither will have any rivals to disturb them.

Ld More. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. None that will disturb them, I dare swear.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha, ha!

Ld More.
Lady Grave.
Lady Bet. } Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Cha. I don't know, gentlefolks—but you are all in extreme good humour, methinks; I hope there's none of it affected.

Lady Easy. I should be loth to answer for any but my lord Foppington. [*Aside.*

Lady Bet. Mine is not, I'll swear.

Ld More. Nor mine, I'm sure.

Lady Grave. Mine's sincere, depend upon't.

Ld Fop. And may the eternal frowns of the whole sex doubly demme, if mine is not.

Lady Easy. Well, good people, I am mighty glad to hear it. You have all performed extremely well: but, if you please, you shall even give over your wit now, while it is well.

Lady Bet. [*To herself.*]—Now I see his humour, I'll stand it out, if I were sure to die for't.

Sir Cha. You should not have proceeded so far with my lord Foppington, after what I had told you. [*Aside to Lady* BETTY.

Lady Bet. Pray, Sir Charles, give me leave to understand myself a little.

Sir Cha. Your pardon, madam. I thought a right understanding would have been for both your interest and reputation.

Lady Bet. For his, perhaps.

Sir Cha. Nay, then, madam, it's time for me to take care of my friend.

Lady Bet. I never, in the least, doubted your friendship to him, in any thing that was to shew yourself my enemy.

Sir Cha. Since I see, madam, you have so ungrateful a sense of my lord Morelove's merit, and my service, I shall never be ashamed of using my power henceforth to keep him entirely out of your ladyship's.

Lady Bet. Was ever any thing so insolent! I could find in my heart to run the hazard of a downright compliance, if it were only to convince him, that my power, perhaps, is not inferior to his. [*To herself.*

Lady Easy. My lord Foppington, I think you generally lead the company upon these occasions. Pray, will you think of some prettier sort of diversion for us than parties and whispers?

Ld Fop. What say you, ladies? shall we step and see what's done at the basset-table?

Lady Bet. With all my heart. Lady Easy—

Lady Easy. I think 'tis the best thing we can do, and, because we won't part to-night, you shall all sup where you dined—What say you, my lord?

Ld More. Your ladyship may be sure of me, madam.

Ld Fop. Ay! ay! we'll all come.

Lady Easy. Then, pray, let's change parties a little. My lord Foppington, you shall 'squire me.

Ld Fop. O! you do me honour, madam.

Lady Bet. My lord Morelove, pray let me speak with you.

Ld More. Me, madam?

Lady Bet. If you please, my lord.

Ld More. Ha! that look shot through me. What can this mean? [*Aside.*

Lady Bet. This is no proper place to tell you what it is, but there is one thing I'd fain be truly answered in: I suppose you'll be at my lady Easy's by and by, and if you'll give me leave there——

Ld More. If you please to do me that honour, madam, I shall certainly be there.

Lady Bet. That's all, my lord.

Ld More. Is not your ladyship for walking?

Lady Bet. If your lordship dares venture with me.

Ld More. O! madam! [*Taking her hand.*] How my heart dances! what heavenly music in her voice, when softened into kindness. [*Aside.*

Lady Bet. Ha! his hand trembles——Sir Charles may be mistaken.

Ld Fop. My lady Graveairs, you won't let Sir Charles leave us? [*Exeunt.*

[*Manent Sir* CHARLES *and Lady* GRAVEAIRS.

Lady Grave. No, my lord, we'll follow you—stay a little. [*To Sir* CHARLES.

Sir Cha. I thought your ladyship designed to follow them.

Lady Grave. Perhaps I'd speak with you.

Sir Cha. But, madam, consider; we shall certainly be observed.

Lady Grave. Lord, sir, if you think it such a favour. [*Exit hastily.*

Sir Cha. Is she gone? Let her go, &c. [*Exit singing.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Continues.*

Enter Sir CHARLES *and Lord* MORELOVE.

Sir Cha. Come a little this way——My lady Graveairs had an eye upon me as I stole off, and, I'm apprehensive, will make use of any opportunity to talk with me.

Ld More. O! we are pretty safe here——Well, you were speaking of Lady Betty.

Sir Cha. Ay, my lord—I say, notwithstanding all this sudden change of her behaviour, I would not have you yet be too secure of her: for, between you and I, since I told you I have professed myself an open enemy to her power with you—'tis not impossible but this new air of good humour may very much proceed from a little woman's pride, of convincing me you are not yet out of her power.

Ld More. Not unlikely. But still, can we make no advantage of it?

Sir Cha. That's what I have been thinking of—look you——Death! my lady Graveairs!

Ld More. Ha! she will have audience, I find.

Sir Cha. There's no avoiding her—the truth is, I have owed her a little good nature a great while——I see there's but one way of getting rid of her——I must even appoint her a day of payment at last. If you'll step into my lodgings, my lord, I'll just give her an answer, and be with you in a moment.

Ld More. Very well, I'll stay there for you. [*Exit Lord* MORELOVE.

Enter Lady GRAVEAIRS *on the other side.*

Lady Grave. Sir Charles!

Sir Cha. Come, come, no more of these reproachful looks; you'll find, madam, I have deserved better of you than your jealousy imagines—Is it a fault to be tender of your reputation——fie, fie——This may be a proper time to talk, and of my contriving, too——you see I just now shook off my lord Morelove on purpose.

Lady Grave. May I believe you?

Sir Cha. Still doubting my fidelity, and mistaking my discretion for want of good nature!

Lady Grave. Don't think me troublesome—For I confess 'tis death to think of parting with you: since the world sees for you I have neglected friends and reputation, have stood the little insults of disdainful prudes, that envied me perhaps your friendship; have borne the freezing looks of near and general acquaintance—Since this is so—don't let them ridicule me, too, and say my foolish vanity undid me! Don't let them point at me as a cast mistress!

Sir Cha. You wrong me, to suppose the thought: you'll have better of me when we meet: When shall you be at leisure?

Lady Grave. I confess I would see you once again: if what I have more to say prove ineffectual, perhaps it may convince me then, 'tis my interest to part with you—Can you come to-night?

Sir Cha. You know we have company, and I'm afraid they'll stay too late—Cann't it be before supper?—What's o'clock now?

Lady Grave. It's almost six.

Sir Cha. At seven, then, be sure of me; till when, I'd have you go back to the ladies, to avoid suspicion, and about that time have the vapours.

Lady Grave. May I depend upon you? [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. Depend on every thing—A very troublesome business this—Send me once fairly rid on't—if ever I'm caught in an honourable affair again!—A debt, now, that a little ready civility, and away, would satisfy, a man might bear with; but to have a rent-charge upon one's good nature, with an unconscionable long scroll of arrears, too, that would eat out the profits of the best estate in Christendom—ah—intolerable! Well! I'll even to my lord, and shake off the thoughts on't. [*Exit.*

Enter Lady BETTY *and Lady* EASY.

Lady Bet. I observe, my dear, you have usually this great fortune at play; it were enough to make one suspect your good luck with an husband.

Lady Easy. Truly, I don't complain of my fortune either way.

Lady Bet. Pr'ythee tell me, you are often advising me to it; are there those real comfortable advantages in marriage, that our old aunts and grandmothers would persuade us of?

Lady Easy. Upon my word, if I had the worst husband in the world, I should still think so.

Lady Bet. Ay, but then the hazard of not having a good one, my dear.

Lady Easy. You may have a good one, I dare say, if you don't give airs till you spoil him.

Lady Bet. Can there be the same dear, full delight, in giving ease as pain? Oh, my dear, the thought of parting with one's power is insupportable!

Lady Easy. And the keeping it, till it dwindles into no power at all, is most ruefully foolish.

Lady Bet. But still, to marry before one's heartily in love——

Lady Easy. Is not half so formidable a calamity——but if I have any eyes, my dear, you'll run no great hazard of that in venturing on my lord Morelove—You don't know, perhaps, that within this half hour, the tone of your voice is strangely softened to him: ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. My dear, you are, positively, one or other, the most censorious creature in the world—and so I see it's in vain to talk with you——Pray, will you go back to the company?

Lady Easy. Ah! poor Lady Betty! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Changes to Sir* CHARLES'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Sir CHARLES *and Lord* MORELOVE.

Ld More. Charles, you have transported me! You have made my part in the scene so very easy, too, 'tis impossible I should fail in it.

Sir Cha. That's what I considered; for, now, the more you throw yourself into her power, the more I shall be able to force her into yours.

Ld More. After all, (begging the ladies pardon,) your fine women, like bullies, are only stout when they know their men: a man of an honest courage may fright them into any thing! Well, I am fully instructed, and will about it instantly—Won't you go along with me?

Sir Cha. That may not be so proper—besides, I have a little business upon my hands.

Ld More. Oh, your servant, sir—Good bye to you—you sha'n't stir.

Sir Cha. My lord, your servant—[*Exit Lord* MORE.] So! now to dispose myself 'till 'tis time to think of my lady Graveairs—Umph! I have no great maw to that business, methinks—I don't find myself in humour enough to come up to the civil things that are usually expected in the making up of an old quarrel—[EDGING *crosses the stage.*] There goes a warmer temptation by half—Ha! into my wife's bed-chamber, too——I question if the jade has any great business there!——I have a fancy she has only a mind to be taking the opportunity of nobody's being at home, to make her peace with me—let me see—ay, I shall have time enough to go to her ladyship afterwards—Besides, I want a little sleep, I find—Your young fops may talk of their women of quality—but, to me now, there's a strange agreeable convenience in a creature one is not obliged to say much to upon these occasions.

[*Going.*

Enter EDGING.

Edg. Did you call me, sir?

Sir Cha. Ha! all's right—[*Aside.*]—Yes, madam, I did call you. [*Sits down.*

Edg. What would you please to have, sir?

Sir Cha. Have! Why, I would have you grow a good girl, and know when you are well used, hussy.

Edg. Sir, I don't complain of any thing, not I.

Sir Cha. Well, don't be uneasy—I am not angry with you now——Come and kiss me.

Edg. Lard, sir!

Sir Cha. Don't be a fool, now—Come hither.

Edg. Pshaw—— [*Goes to him.*

Sir Cha. No wry face—so—sit down. I won't have you look grave neither; let me see you smile, you jade you.

Edg. Ha, ha! [*Laughs and blushes.*

Sir Cha. Ah, you melting rogue!

Edg. Come, don't you be at your tricks now——Lard, cann't you sit still and talk with one! I am sure there's ten times more love in that, and fifty times the satisfaction, people may say what they will.

Sir Cha. Well! now you're good, you shall have your own way—I am going to lie down in the next room; and, since you love a little chat, come and throw my night-gown over me, and you shall talk me to sleep. [*Exit Sir* CHARLES.

Edg. Yes, sir.——For all his way, I see he likes me still. [*Exit after him.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to the Terrace.*

Enter Lady BETTY, *Lady* EASY, *and Lord* MORELOVE.

Ld More. Nay, madam, there you are too severe upon him; for, bating now and then a little

vanity, my lord Foppington does not want wit sometimes to make him a very tolerable woman's man.

Lady Bet. But such eternal vanity grows tiresome.

Lady Easy. Come, if he were not so loose in his morals, his vanity, methinks, might be easily excused, considering how much 'tis in fashion; for, pray observe what's half the conversation of most of the fine young people about town, but a perpetual affectation of appearing foremost in the knowledge of manners, new modes, and scandal? and, in that, I don't see any body comes up to him.

Ld More. Nor I, indeed—and here he comes—Pray, madam, let's have a little more of him; nobody shews him to more advantage than your ladyship.

Lady Bet. Nay, with all my heart; you'll second me, my lord?

Ld More. Upon occasion, madam——

Lady Easy. Engaging upon parties, my lord? [*Aside, and smiling to Lord* MORE.

Enter Lord FOPPINGTON.

Ld Fop. So, ladies! what's the affair now?

Lady Bet. Why, you were, my lord! I was allowing you a great many good qualities; but Lady Easy says you are a perfect hypocrite; and that, whatever airs you give yourself to the women, she's confident you value no woman in the world equal to your own lady.

Ld Fop. You see, madam, how I am scandalized upon your account. But it is so natural for a prude to be malicious, when a man endeavours to be well with any body but herself—did you ever observe she was piqued at that before? ha, ha!

Lady Bet. I'll swear you are a provoking creature.

Ld Fop. Let's be more familiar upon't, and give her disorder! ha, ha!

Lady Bet. Ha, ha, ha!

Ld Fop. Stop my breath, but Lady Easy is an admirable discoverer!—Marriage is indeed a prodigious security of one's inclination; a man's likely to take a world of pains in an employment, where he cann't be turned out for his idleness.

Lady Bet. I vow, my lord, that's vastly generous to all the fine women; you are for giving them a despotic power in love, I see, to reward and punish as they think fit.

Ld Fop. Ha, ha! Right, madam; what signifies beauty without power? And a fine woman, when she's married, makes as ridiculous a figure, as a beaten general marching out of a garrison.

Lady Easy. I'm afraid, Lady Betty, the greatest danger in your use of power, would be from a too heedless liberality; you would more mind the man than his merit.

Ld Fop. Piqued again, by all that's fretful!—Well, certainly, to give envy is a pleasure inexpressible. [*To Lady* BETTY.

Lady Bet. Ha, ha!

Lady Easy. Does not she shew him well, my lord? [*Aside to Lord* MORE.

Ld More. Perfectly, and me to myself—For now, I almost blush to think I ever was uneasy at him. [*To Lady* EASY.

Ld Fop. Lady Easy, I ask ten thousand pardons: I'm afraid I am rude all this while.

Lady Easy. Oh, not at all, my lord; you are always good company, when you please: as but in some things, indeed, you are apt to be like other fine gentlemen—a little too loose in your principles.

Ld Fop. Oh, madam, never to the offence of the ladies; I agree in any community with them; nobody is a more constant churchman, when the fine women are there.

Lady Easy. Oh fie, my lord! you ought not to go for their sakes at all! And I wonder, you that are for being such a good husband of your virtues, are not afraid of bringing your prudence into a lampoon or a play.

Lady Bet. Lampoons and plays, madam, are only things to be laughed at.

Ld Fop. Odso! ladies, the court's coming home, I see; shall not we make our bows?

Lady Bet. Oh, by all means!

Lady Easy. Lady Betty, I must leave you; for I am obliged to write letters; and I know you won't give me time after supper.

Lady Bet. Well, my dear, I'll make a short visit, and be with you. [*Exit Lady* EASY.] Pray, what's become of my lady Gravairs?

Ld More. Oh, I believe she's gone home, madam: she seemed not to be very well.

Ld Fop. And where's Sir Charles, my lord?

Ld More. I left him at his own lodgings.

Lady Bet. He's upon some ramble, I'm afraid.

Ld Fop. Nay, as for that matter, a man may ramble at home sometimes—But here come the chaises; we must make a little more haste, madam. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Changes to Sir* CHARLES'S *Lodgings.*

Enter Lady EASY *and a Servant.*

Lady Easy. Is your master come home?

Serv. Yes, madam.

Lady Easy. Where is he?

Serv. I believe, madam, he's laid down to sleep.

Lady Easy. Where's Edging? Bid her get me some wax and paper——stay, it's no matter, now I think on it—there's some above upon my toilette. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE V.—*Opens, and discovers Sir* CHARLES *without his periwig, and* EDGING *by him, both asleep, in two easy chairs. Then enters Lady* EASY, *who starts and trembles, some time unable to speak.*

Lady Easy. Ha! protect me, virtue, patience, reason!

Teach me to bear this killing sight, or let
Me think my dreaming senses are deceived!
For sure, a sight like this might raise the arm
Of duty, even to the breast of love! At least,
I'll throw this vizor of my patience off:
Now wake him in his guilt,
And, barefaced, front him with my wrongs.
I'll talk to him till he blushes, nay, till he——
Frowns on me, perhaps—and then
I'm lost again—The ease of a few tears
Is all that's left to me——
And duty, too, forbids me to insult,
When I have vowed obedience—Perhaps
The fault's in me, and nature has not formed
Me with the thousand little requisites
That warm the heart to love——
Somewhere there is a fault——
But Heaven best knows what both of us deserve:
Ha! bare-headed, and in so sound a sleep!
Who knows, while thus exposed to the unwholesome air,
But Heaven offended may o'ertake his crime,
And, in some languishing distemper, leave him
A severe example of its violated laws——
Forbid it mercy, and forbid it love!
This may prevent it.

[*Takes a steinkirk off her neck, and lays it gently on his head.*

And, if he should wake offended at my too busy care, let my heart-breaking patience, duty, and my fond affection, plead my pardon. [*Exit.*

[*After she has been out some time, a bell rings;* EDGING *wakes, and stirs Sir* CHARLES.

Edg. Oh!

Sir Cha. How now! what's the matter?

Edg. Oh, bless my soul! my lady's come home.

Sir Cha. Go, go, then. [*Bell rings.*

Edg. Oh lud! my head's in such a condition, too. [*Runs to the glass.*] I am coming, madam—Oh lud! here's no powder, neither—Here, madam. [*Exit.*

Sir Cha. How now! [*Feeling the steinkirk upon his head.*] What's this? How came it here? [*Puts on his wig.*] Did not I see my wife wear this to-day?—Death! she cann't have been here, sure—It could not be jealousy that brought her home—for my coming was accidental—so, too, I fear, was hers—How careless have I been?—not to secure the door, neither—'Twas foolish—It must be so! She certainly has seen me here sleeping with her woman: if so, how low an hypocrite to her must that sight have proved me! The thought has made me despicable, even to myself—How mean a vice is lying, and how often have these empty pleasures lulled my honour and my conscience to lethargy, while I grossly have abused her, poorly skulking behind a thousand falsehoods!—Now I reflect, this has not been the first of her discoveries—How contemptible a figure must I have made to her! A crowd of recollected circumstances confirms me now, she has been long acquainted with my follies; and yet, with what amazing prudence has she borne the secret pangs of injured love, and wore an everlasting smile to me! This asks a little thinking—something should be done—I'll see her instantly, and be resolved from her behaviour. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.—*Changes to another Room.*

Enter Lady EASY *and* EDGING.

Lady Easy. Where have you been, Edging?

Edg. Been, madam! I—I—I—I came as soon as I heard you ring, madam.

Lady Easy. How guilt confounds her! but she's below my thought—Fetch my last new sack hither—I have a mind to alter it a little—make haste.

Edg. Yes, madam——I see she does not suspect any thing. [*Exit.*

Lady Easy. Heigh ho! [*Sitting down.*] I had forgot—but I'm unfit for writing now——'Twas an hard conflict——yet it's a joy to think it over; a secret pride, to tell my heart my conduct has been just——How low are vicious minds, that offer injuries! how much superior innocence, that bears them! Still there's a pleasure, even in the melancholy of a quiet conscience—Away, my fears; it is not yet impossible—for, while his human nature is not quite shook off, I ought not to despair.

Re-enter EDGING, *with a Sack.*

Edg. Here's the sack, madam.

Lady Easy. So, sit down there—and, let me see—here——rip off all that silver.

Edg. Indeed, I always thought it would become your ladyship better without it——But, now, suppose, madam, you carried another row of gold round the scollops, and then you take and lay this silver plain all along the gathers, and your ladyship will perfectly see, it will give the thing ten thousand times another air.

Lady Easy. Pr'ythee, don't be impertinent; do as I bid you.

Edg. Nay, madam, with all my heart; your ladyship may do as you please.

Lady Easy. This creature grows so confident; and I dare not part with her, lest he should think it jealousy. [*Aside.*

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Cha. So, my dear! What, at work! how are you employed, pray?

Lady Easy. I was thinking to alter this sack here.

Sir Cha. What's amiss? Methinks it's very pretty.

Edg. Yes, sir, it's pretty enough for that matter; but my lady has a mind it should be proper, too.

Sir Cha. Indeed!

Lady Easy. I fancy plain gold and black would become me better.

Sir Cha. That's a grave thought, my dear.

Edg. O, dear sir, not at all; my lady's much in the right; I am sure, as it is, it's fit for nothing but a girl.

Sir Cha. Leave the room.

Edg. Lord, sir! I cann't stir—I must stay to—

Sir Cha. Go— [*Angrily.*

Edg. [*Throwing down the work hastily, and crying, aside.*] If ever I speak to him again, I'll be burned! [*Exit* EDGING.

Sir Cha. Sit still, my dear—I came to talk with you——and, which you well may wonder at, what I have to say is of importance, too; but it is in order to my hereafter always talking kindly to you.

Lady Easy. Your words were never disobliging, nor can I charge you with a look that ever had the appearance of being unkind.

Sir Cha. The perpetual spring of your good humour lets me draw no merit from what I have appeared to be, which makes me curious now to know your thoughts of what I really am: and never having asked you this before, it puzzles me: nor can I (my strange negligence considered) reconcile to reason your first thought of venturing upon marriage with me.

Lady Easy. I never thought it such a hazard.

Sir Cha. How could a woman of your restraint in principles, sedateness, sense, and tender disposition, propose to lead an happy life with one (now I reflect) that hardly took an hour's pains, even before marriage, to appear but what I am: a loose, unheeded wretch, absent in all I do, civil, and as often rude, without design, unseasonably thoughtful, easy to a fault, and, in my best of praise, but carelessly good-natured? How shall I reconcile your temper with having made so strange a choice?

Lady Easy. Your own words may answer you—Your having never seemed to be but what you really were; and, through that carelessness of temper, there still shone forth to me an undesigning honesty, I always doubted of in smoother faces: thus, while I saw you took least pains to win me, you pleased and wooed me most; nay, I have thought, that such a temper could never be deliberately unkind; or, at the worst, I knew that errors, from the want of thinking, might be borne; at least, when, probably, one moment's serious thought might end them: these were my worst of fears; and these, when weighed by growing love, against my solid hopes, were nothing.

Sir Cha. My dear, your understanding startles me, and justly calls my own in question. I blush to think I've worn so bright a jewel in my bosom, and, till this hour, have scarce been curious once to look upon its lustre.

Lady Easy. You set too high a value on the common qualities of an easy wife.

Sir Cha. Virtues, like benefits, are double, when concealed: and, I confess, I yet suspect you of an higher value far than I have spoke you.

Lady Easy. I understand you not.

Sir Cha. I'll speak more plainly to you—Be free, and tell me—Where did you leave this handkerchief?

Lady Easy. Ha!

Sir Cha. What is it you start at? You hear the question.

Lady Easy. What shall I say? my fears confound me. [*Aside.*

Sir Cha. Be not concerned, my dear; be easy in the truth, and tell me.

Lady Easy. I cannot speak—and I could wish you'd not oblige me to it—'tis the only thing I ever yet refused you; and though I want reason for my will, let me not answer you.

Sir Cha. Your will, then, be a reason; and since I see you are so generously tender of reproaching me, it is fit I should be easy in my gratitude, and make, what ought to be my shame, my joy. Let me be therefore pleased to tell you now, your wondrous conduct has waked me to a sense of your disquiet past, and resolution never to disturb it more—And (not that I offer it as a merit, but yet in blind compliance to my will) let me beg you would immediately discharge your woman.

Lady Easy. Alas! I think not of her—O, my dear, distract me not with this excess of goodness. [*Weeping.*

Sir Cha. Nay, praise me not, lest I reflect how little I have deserved it; I see you are in pain to give me this confusion. Come, I will not shock your softness by my untimely blush for what is past, but rather sooth you to a pleasure at my sense of joy for my recovered happiness to come. Give, then, to my new-born love what name you please; it cannot, shall not, be too kind: O! it cannot be too soft for what my soul swells up with emulation to deserve—Receive me, then, entire at last, and take, what yet no woman ever truly had, my conquered heart!

Lady Easy. O, the soft treasure! O, the dear reward of long-deserving love!—Now am I blest indeed, to see you kind without the expence of pain in being so, to make you mine with easiness: thus! thus to have you mine, is something more than happiness; 'tis double life, and madness of abounding joy. But it was a pain intolerable to give you a confusion.

Sir Cha. O thou engaging virtue! But I am too slow in doing justice to thy love: I know thy softness will refuse me; but remember, I insist upon it——let thy woman be discharged this minute.

Lady Easy. No, my dear; think me not so low in faith, to fear, that, after what you have said, it will ever be in her power to do me future injury. When I can conveniently provide for her, I'll think on it; but to discharge her now, might let her guess at the occasion; and methinks I would have our difference, like our endearments, be equally a secret to our servants.

Sir Cha. Still my superior every way!—be it as you have better thought——Well, my dear, now I'll confess a thing that was not in your power to accuse me of;—to be short, I own this creature is not the only one I have been to blame with.

Lady Easy. I know she is not, and was always less concerned to find it so; for constancy in errors might have been fatal to me.

Sir Cha. What is it you know, my dear? [*Surprised.*

Lady Easy. Come, I'm not afraid to accuse you now——my lady Graveairs——Your carelessness, my dear, let all the world know it; and it would have been hard indeed, had it been only to me a secret.

Sir Cha. My dear, I will ask no more questions, for fear of being more ridiculous; I do confess, I thought my discretion there had been a master-piece—How contemptible must I have looked all this while!

Lady Easy. You sha'n't say so.

Sir Cha. Well, to let you see I had some shame, as well as nature in me, I had writ this to my lady Graveairs, upon my first discovering that you knew I had wronged you: read it.

Lady Easy. [*Reads.*] "Something has happened that prevents the visit I intended you; and I could gladly wish, you never would reproach me if I tell you, 'tis utterly inconvenient that I should ever see you more." This, indeed, was more than I had merited.

Enter a Servant.

Sir Cha. Who is there? Here—Step with this to Lady Graveairs.

[*Seals the Letter, and gives it the Servant.*

Serv. Yes, sir——Madam, my lady Betty's come.

Lady Easy. I'll wait on her.

Sir Cha. My dear, I am thinking there may be other things my negligence may have wronged you in; but be assured, as I discover, all shall be corrected.——Is there any part or circumstance in your fortune that I can change or yet make easier to you?

Lady Easy. None, my dear; your good nature never stinted me in that; and now, methinks, I have less occasion there than ever.

Re-enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, my lord Morelove's come.

Sir Cha. I am coming——I think I told you of the design we had laid against Lady Betty.

Lady Easy. You did, and I should be pleased to be myself concerned in it.

Sir Cha. I believe we may employ you: I know he waits for me with impatience. But, my dear, won't you think me tasteless to the joy you have given me, to suffer, at this time, any concern but you to employ my thoughts?

Lady Easy. Seasons must be obeyed; and since I know your friend's happiness depending, I could not taste my own, should you neglect it.

Sir Cha. Thou easy sweetness!—O! what a waste of thy neglected love has my unthinking brain committed! but time, and future thrift of tenderness, shall yet repair it all. The hours will come when this soft gliding stream that swells my heart, uninterrupted shall renew its course—

And, like the ocean after ebb, shall move
With constant force of due returning love.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*Changes to another Room.*

Re-enter Lady EASY *and Lady* BETTY.

Lady Bet. You have been in tears, my dear, and yet you look pleased, too.

Lady Easy. You will pardon me, if I cannot let you into circumstances; but be satisfied, Sir Charles has made me happy, even to a pain of joy.

Lady Bet. Indeed, I am truly glad of it; though I am sorry to find, that any one who has generosity enough to do you justice, should, unprovoked, be so great an enemy to me.

Lady Easy. Sir Charles your enemy!

Lady Bet. My dear, you will pardon me if I always thought him so, but now I am convinced of it.

Lady Easy. In what, pray? I cannot think you will find him so.

Lady Bet. O! madam, it has been his whole business, of late, to make an utter breach between my lord Morelove and me.

Lady Easy. That may be owing to your usage of my lord: perhaps he thought it would not disoblige you. I am confident you are mistaken in him.

Lady Bet. O! I don't use to be out in things of this nature; I can see well enough: but I shall be able to tell you more when I have talked with my lord.

Lady Easy. Here he comes; and because you shall talk with him—No excuses—for positively I will leave you together.

Lady Bet. Indeed, my dear, I desire you will stay, then; for I know you think now, that I have a mind to———

Lady Easy. To——to——ha, ha, ha!

[*Going.*

Lady Bet. Well! I'll remember this.

Enter Lord MORELOVE.

Ld More. I hope I don't fright you away, madam?

Lady Easy. Not at all, my lord; but I must beg your pardon for a moment; I will wait upon you immediately. [*Exit.*

Lady Bet. My lady Easy gone?

Ld More. Perhaps, madam, in friendship to you; she thinks I may have deserved the coldness you of late have shewn to me, and was willing to give you this opportunity to convince me you have not done it without just grounds and reason.

Lady Bet. How handsomely does he reproach me! but I cannot bear that he should think I know it. [*Aside.*]—My lord, whatever has passed between you and me, I dare swear that could not be her thoughts at this time; for, when two people have appeared professed enemies, she cannot but think one will as little care to give, as the other receive, a justification of their actions.

Ld More. Passion, indeed, often does repeat-

ed injuries on both sides; but I don't remember, in my heat of error, I ever yet professed myself your enemy.

Lady Bet. My lord, I shall be very free with you—I confess, I do not think, now, I have a greater enemy in the world.

Ld More. If having loved you to my own disquiet, be injurious, I am contented then to stand the foremost of your enemies.

Lady Bet. O! my lord, there's no great fear of your being my enemy that way, I dare say—

Ld More. There is no other way my heart can bear to offend you now; and I foresee in that it will persist to my undoing.

Lady Bet. Fie, fie, my lord! we know where your heart is well enough.

Ld More. My conduct has, indeed, deserved this scorn; and therefore 'tis but just I should submit to your resentment, and beg (though I am assured in vain) for pardon. [*Kneels.*

Enter Sir CHARLES.

Sir Cha. How, my lord!

[*Lord* MORELOVE *rises.*

Lady Bet. Ha! He here! This was unlucky. [*Aside.*

Ld More. O, pity my confusion! [*To Lady* BETTY.

Sir Cha. I am sorry to see you can so soon forget yourself: methinks the insults you have borne from that lady, by this time should have warned you into a disgust of her regardless principles.

Ld More. Hold, Sir Charles, while you and I are friends! I desire you would speak with honour of this lady—'Tis sufficient I have no complaint against her, and——

Lady Bet. My lord, I beg you would resent this thing no farther: an injury like this is better punished with our contempt; apparent malice should only be laughed at.

Sir Cha. Ha, ha! the old resource. Offers of any hopes to delude him from his resentment, and then as the Grand Monarque did with Cavalier: and then you are sure to keep your word with him.

Lady Bet. Sir Charles, to let you know how far I am above your little spleen,—my lord, your hand! from this hour——

Sir Cha. Pshaw! pshaw! all design! all pique! mere artifice and disappointed woman.

Lady Bet. Look you, sir, not that I doubt my lord's opinion of me; yet——

Sir Cha. Look you, madam; in short, your word has been too often taken, to let you make up quarrels, as you used to do, with a soft look, and a fair promise you never intended to keep.

Lady Bet. Was ever such insolence! He won't give me leave to speak.

Ld More. Sir Charles!

Lady Bet. No, pray, my lord, have patience; and since his malice seems to grow particular, I dare his worst, and urge him to the proof on't: Pray, sir, wherein can you charge me with breach of promise to my lord?

Sir Cha. Death! you won't deny it? How often, to piece up a quarrel, have you appointed him to visit you alone; and, though you have promised to see no other company the whole day, when he was come he has found you among the laugh of noisy fops, coquettes, and coxcombs, disconsolately gay, while your full eyes ran over with transport at their flattery, and your own vain power of pleasing? How often, I say, have you been known to throw away, at least, four hours of your good humour upon such wretches, and, the minute they were gone, grew only dull to him, sunk into a distasteful spleen, complained you had talked yourself into the head-ache, and then indulged upon the dear delight of seeing him in pain, and, by the time you had stretched and gaped him heartily out of patience, of a sudden most importantly remember you had outsat your appointment with my lady Fiddle-faddle, and immediately order your coach to the park?

Lady Bet. Yet, sir—have you done?

Sir Cha. No—though this might serve to shew the nature of your principles: but the noble conquest you have gained at last over defeated sense of reputation, too, has made your fame immortal.

Ld More. How, sir?

Lady Bet. My reputation?

Sir Cha. Ay, madam, your reputation—My lord, if I advance a falsehood, then resent it. I say your reputation——It has been your late whole pride of late to be the common toast of every public table, vain even in the infamous addresses of a married man, my lord Foppington: let that be reconciled with reputation. I will not shake hands with shame, and bow me to the low contempt which you deserve from him; not but I suppose you will yet endeavour to recover her. Now you find ill usage in danger of losing your conquest, 'tis possible you will stop at nothing to preserve it.

Lady Bet. Sir Charles——

[*Walks disordered, and he after her.*

Sir Cha. I know your vanity is so voracious, it will even wound itself to feed itself; offer him a blank perhaps, to fill up with hopes of what nature he pleases, and part even with your pride to keep him.

Lady Bet. Sir Charles, I have not deserved this of you. [*Bursting into tears.*

Sir Cha. Ah! true woman! drop him a soft dissembling tear, and then his just resentment must be hushed of course.

Ld More. O Charles! I can bear no more; those tears are so reproaching.

Sir Cha. Hist, for your life! [*Aside, and then aloud.*] My lord, if you believe her, you are undone; the very next sight of my lord Foppington would make her yet forswear all that she can promise.

Lady Bet. My lord Foppington! Is that the mighty crime that must condemn me, then? You know I used him but as a tool of my resentment, which you yourself, by a pretended friendship to us both, most artfully provoked me to——

Ld More. Hold, I conjure you, madam; I want not this conviction.

Lady Bet. Send for him this minute, and you and he shall both be witnesses of the contempt and detestation I have for any forward hopes his vanity may have given him, or your malice would insinuate.

Sir Cha. Death! you would as soon eat fire—as soon part with your luxurious taste of folly, as dare to own the half of this before his face, or any one, that would make you blush to deny it to—Here comes my wife; now we shall see—Ha! and my lord Foppington with her—Now! now, we shall see this mighty proof of your sincerity—Now! my lord, you'll have a warning sure, and henceforth know me for your friend, indeed.

Enter Lady EASY *and Lord* FOPPINGTON.

Lady Easy. In tears, my dear! what's the matter?

Lady Bet. O, my dear, all I told you is true: Sir Charles has shewn himself so inveterately my enemy, that, if I believed I deserved but half his hate, 'twould make me hate myself.

Ld Fop. Hark you, Charles; pr'ythee what is this business?

Sir Cha. Why, yours, my lord, for aught I know—I have made such a breach betwixt them—I cannot promise much for the courage of a woman; but if hers holds, I am sure it is wide enough; you may enter ten abreast, my lord.

Ld Fop. Say'st thou so, Charles? Then, I hold six to four, I am the first man in the town.

Lady Easy. Sure there must be some mistake in this: I hope he has not made my lord your enemy.

Lady Bet. I know not what he has done.

Ld More. Far be that thought! Alas! I am too much in fear myself, that what I have this day committed, advised by his mistaken friendship, may have done my love irreparable prejudice.

Lady Bet. No, my lord; since I perceive his little arts have not prevailed upon your good nature to my prejudice, I am bound in gratitude, in duty to myself, and to the confession you have made, my lord, to acknowledge now, I have been to blame, too.

Ld More. Ha! is it possible? can you own so much? O my transported heart!

Lady Bet. He says I have taken pleasure in seeing you uneasy—I own it—but 'twas when that uneasiness I thought proceeded from your love; and if you did love——'twill not be much to pardon it.

Ld More. O let my soul, thus bending to your power, adore this soft descending goodness!

Lady Bet. And, since the giddy woman's slights I have shewn you too often, have been public, 'tis fit, at last, the amends and reparation should be so: therefore, what I offered to Sir Charles, I now repeat before this company, my utter detestation of any past or future gallantry, that has, or shall be offered by me, to your uneasiness.

Ld More. Oh! be less generous, or teach me to deserve it——Now blush, Sir Charles, at your injurious accusation.

Ld Fop. Ah! Pardi, voila quelque chose d'extraordinaire!

Lady Bet. As for my lord Foppington, I owe him thanks for having been so friendly an instrument of our reconciliation; for, though, in the little outward gallantry I received from him, I did not immediately trust him with my design in it, yet I have a better opinion of his understanding, than to suppose he could mistake it.

Ld Fop. I am struck dumb with the deliberation of her assurance! and do not positively remember, that the *sonchalance* of my temper ever had so bright an occasion to shew itself before.

Lady Bet. My lord, I hope you will pardon the freedom I have taken with you.

Ld Fop. Oh, madam, do not be under the confusion of an apology upon my account; for, in cases of this nature, I am never disappointed, but when I find a lady of the same mind two hours together——Madam, I have lost a thousand fine women in my time, but never had the ill manners to be out of humour with any one for refusing me, since I was born.

Lady Bet. My lord, that's a very prudent temper.

Ld Fop. Madam, to convince you that I am in an universal peace with mankind, since you own I have so far contributed to your happiness, give me leave to have the honour of completing it, by joining your hand, where you have already offered up your inclination.

Lady Bet. My lord, that's a favour I cannot refuse you.

Ld More. Generous, indeed, my lord!

[*Lord* FOPPINGTON *joins their hands.*

Ld Fop. And, stop my breath, if ever I was better pleased since my first entrance into human nature!

Sir Cha. How now, my lord! what? throw up the cards before you have lost the game?

Ld Fop. Look you, Charles, 'tis true I did design to have played with her alone: but he that will keep well with the ladies, must sometimes be content to make one at a pool with them; and since I know I must engage her in my turn, I don't see any great odds in letting him take the first game with her.

Sir Cha. Wisely considered, my lord!

Lady Bet. And now, Sir Charles——

Sir Cha. And now, madam, I'll save you the trouble of a long speech, and, in one word, confess that every thing I have done in regard to you this day, was purely artificial.—I saw there was no way to secure you to my lord Morelove, but by alarming your pride with the danger of losing him; and, since the success must have by this time convinced you, that in love nothing is more ridiculous than an over-acted aversion, I am sure you won't take it ill, if we at last congratulate your good nature, by heartily laughing at the fright we had put you in: ha, ha, ha!

Lady Easy. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. Why——Well, I declare it now, I hate you worse than ever.

Sir Cha. Ha, ha, ha! And was it afraid they would take away its love from it?——Poor Lady Betty! Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Easy. My dear, I beg your pardon; but it is impossible not to laugh when one is so heartily pleased.

Ld Fop. Really, madam, I am afraid the humour of the company will draw me into your displeasure, too; but, if I were to expire this moment, my last breath would positively go out with a laugh. Ha, ha, ha!

Lady Bet. Nay, I have deserved it all, that's the truth on't—but I hope, my lord, you were not in this design against me.

Ld More. As a proof, madam, I am inclined never to deceive you more—I do confess I had my share in it.

Lady Bet. You do, my lord—then I declare it was a design, one or other—the best carried on that ever I knew in my life; and (to my shame I own it) for aught I know, the only thing that could have prevailed upon my temper: 'twas a foolish pride, that has cost me many a bitten lip to support it—I wish we don't both repent, my lord.

Ld More. Don't you repent without me, and we never shall.

Sir Cha. Well, madam, now the worst that the world can say of your past conduct, is, that my lord had constancy, and you had tried it.

Enter a Servant to Lord MORELOVE.

Serv. My lord, Mr Lefevre's below, and desires to know what time your lordship will please to have the music begin.

Ld More. Sir Charles, what say you? will you give me leave to bring them hither?

Sir Cha. As the ladies think fit, my lord.

Lady Bet. Oh! by all means; 'twill be better here, unless we could have the Terrace to ourselves.

Ld More. Then, pray desire them to come hither immediately.

Serv. Yes, my lord. [*Exit Servant.*

Enter Lady GRAVEAIRS.

Sir Cha. Lady Graveairs!

Lady Grave. Yes, you may well start! But don't suppose I am now come, like a poor tame fool, to upbraid your guilt; but, if I could, to blast you with a look.

Sir Cha. Come, come, you have sense—don't expose yourself—you are unhappy, and I own myself the cause. The only satisfaction I can offer you, is to protest, no new engagement takes me from you; but a sincere reflection of the long neglect and injuries I have done the best of wives; for whose amends, and only sake, I now must part with you, and all the inconvenient pleasures of my life.

Lady Grave. Have you then fallen into the low contempt of exposing me, and to your wife, too?

Sir Cha. 'Twas impossible; without it, I could never be sincere in my conversion.

Lady Grave. Despicable!

Sir Cha. Do not think so——for my sake I know she'll not reproach you—nor, by her carriage, ever let the world perceive you have wronged her. My dear—

Lady Easy. Lady Graveairs, I hope you will sup with us?

Lady Grave. I cannot refuse so much good company, madam.

Sir Cha. You see the worst of her resentment. In the mean time, don't endeavour to be her friend, and she'll never be your enemy.

Lady Grave. I am unfortunate—'tis what my folly has deserved, and I submit to it.

Ld More. So! here is the music.

Lady Easy. Come, ladies, shall we sit?

SONG.

Sabina, with an angel's face,
By love ordained for joy,
Seems of the siren's cruel race,
To charm and then destroy.
With all the arts of look and dress,
She fans the fatal fire;
Through pride, mistaken oft for grace,
She bids the swains expire.
The god of love, enraged to see
The nymph defy his flame,
Pronounced his merciless decree
Against the haughty dame.
Let age with double speed o'ertake her,
Let love the room of pride supply;
And when the lovers all forsake her,
A spotless virgin let her die.

Sir CHARLES *comes forward with Lady* EASY.

Sir Cha. Now, my dear, I find my happiness grow fast upon me; in all my past experience of the sex, I found, even among the better sort, so much of folly, pride, malice, passion, and irresolute desire, that I concluded thee but of the foremost rank, and therefore, scarce worthy my concern; but thou hast stirred me with so severe a proof of thy exalted virtue, it gives me wonder equal to my love—If, then, the unkindly thought of what I have been, hereafter shall intrude upon thy growing quiet, let this reflection teach thee to be easy:

Thy wrongs, when greatest, most thy virtue proved;
And, from that virtue found, I blushed, and truly loved.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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